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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

November 2, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DONNA F. EDWARDS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Everywhere I go in my district, people tell me they are frightened. They are frightened about what is happening in this country. They fear for the future of our country. What they're talking about is that they fear for our freedoms and they fear for the principles that formed this country and have always been the basis on which we've operated. I share that fear; and I believe

they should be fearful. And I believe that the greatest fear that we all should have to our freedom comes from this room, this very room, and what may happen later this week in terms of a tax increase bill masquerading as a health care bill. I believe we have more to fear from the potential of that bill passing than we do from any terrorist right now in any country.

In order to help explain some of why we should be fearful, the Republican Conference has gone through Speaker PELOSI's bill—tax bill masquerading as a health care bill—and brought out some pertinent points page by page; and I want to share some of those with people. One of the good things that's happened this year is that people have learned they can read these bills and become familiar with them themselves, so they don't need us to tell them, but it may help to point to specific pages.

Page 94—section 202(c) prohibits the sale of private individual health insurance policies beginning in 2013, forcing individuals to purchase coverage through the Federal Government. We can't make that up. It's right there in the bill.

Page 110—section 222(e) requires the use of Federal dollars to fund abortions through the government-run health plan; and, if the Hyde amendment were ever not renewed, would require the plan to fund elective abortions.

Page 111—section 223 establishes a new board of Federal bureaucrats (the "Health Benefits Advisory Committee") to dictate the health plans that all individuals must purchase; and would likely require all Americans to subsidize and purchase plans that cover any abortion.

I think one of the funniest pieces in the bill, if anything can be considered funny, page 122, section 233(a)(3), requires the commissioner, the new insurance czar, to, quote, issue guidance on best practices of plain language writing—this from the same people

who wrote a 1,990-page health care bill which is very difficult to read.

Page 1183—section 1904 provides \$750 million in Federal funding for a new entitlement program to offer, quote, knowledge of realistic expectations of age-appropriate child behaviors and skills for parents to interact with their child.

Page 1255—sections 2231-2235 makes veterinary students eligible for up to \$283 million in Federal scholarship and student loan forgiveness funding.

Page 1432—section 2531 provides incentive payments to States that enact new medical liability laws—but only if such laws, quote, do not limit attorneys' fees or impose caps on damages.

We need medical liability reform. This bill will prevent that from happening. It's a bad bill. The American people should be frightened of it.

OUR NATURAL GAS RESERVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, thanks to new drilling technologies that are unlocking substantial amounts of natural gas from shale rock, the Nation's estimated gas reserves have surged by 35 percent, according to a recent study. The study conducted by the Potential Gas Committee, the authority on natural gas supplies, has indicated that the United States possesses a total natural gas reserve of 1,836 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, or enough to last almost a century at current consumption rates. This new estimate shows an exceptionally strong and optimistic gas supply picture for this country, according to the report, which is issued every 2 years by a group of academic and industry experts. The new estimate is the highest resource evaluation in the committee's 44-year history and some geologists say even this estimate is too conservative.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Much of the 35 percent increase comes from estimated gas reserves that are trapped deep in dense shale rock which drilling companies have only recently learned how to tap. Shale formations are deep underground, 6,000 feet or more, and the rock is relatively impermeable. Deep drilling is expensive, and in the past the amount of gas that could be recovered was not sufficient to justify the cost. However, new advances in production techniques have boosted all previous estimates of financially recoverable natural gas.

One shale formation that is receiving new attention is the Marcellus basin, a 400-million-year-old shale formation stretching from New York to West Virginia. That basin alone is believed to hold as much as 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, or the approximate equivalent of 80 billion barrels of oil. It's not clear, however, how much of this shale gas is recoverable.

In recent years, natural gas producers have expanded the use of a technique called horizontal drilling. After drilling more than a mile below the Earth's surface to reach the shale layer below, a drill operator then slowly steers the drill bit to one side until it is heading sideways across the shale layer. This technique allows access to more of the shale than a traditional vertical well could provide. However, even with this new technique, the density of shale rock still traps most of the gas. Producers therefore use a process called hydraulic fracturing in which a water-and-sand mixture is forced at very high pressure into the well that creates millions of tiny cracks in the rock, enabling more of the gas to be released. And while shale gas only provides a small fraction of the Nation's total gas production, many experts believe the rising supply of natural gas means it can be substituted for other fossil fuels.

Natural gas can also serve as a bridge between our current energy feedstocks and renewable energy production. According to Guy Caruso, the former administrator of the Energy Information Administration, "natural gas has a role to play as a bridge because of the long lead time and scalability issues of renewable fuels. It's nice to have aspirations about renewable energy and efficiency, but we need to recognize these long-term goals and that we need something to get us there in the meantime."

As an energy source, natural gas is cheaper than oil, and when burned it emits 30 percent less carbon dioxide than oil and 45 percent less carbon dioxide than coal on an energy equivalent basis. Natural gas is also highly efficient. Approximately 90 percent of the natural gas produced is delivered to consumers as useful energy. In contrast, only about 30 percent of the energy converted to electricity in conventional generating facilities ever reaches consumers. And with 84 percent of the natural gas consumed in the United States being produced do-

mestically, an increase in the use of natural gas would not only dramatically lower greenhouse gas emissions but it would also reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Natural gas powered vehicles in use today are also helping to improve air quality by displacing petroleum powered vehicles which contribute about three-fourths of the carbon dioxide pollution found in urban areas. According to NGV America, one of out of every 10 transit buses and over 130,000 additional school buses, taxicabs, garbage trucks and other vehicles on U.S. roads are already fueled with cleaner burning natural gas. In fact, in 2008, the use of natural gas vehicles displaced almost 300 million gallons of petroleum use in the United States.

Using natural gas instead of coal or oil is a low-cost, low-emissions solution for reducing our Nation's dependence on foreign energy sources while also reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

YEMEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To meet the President's deadline for closing Guantanamo, there has been a rush during the past 2 months to transfer as many detainees as possible to their home countries, or to a third country that would accept them.

On September 26, the administration announced that a detainee named Alla Ali Bin Ali Ahmed was transferred to Yemen. The announcement did not reveal the terms of his transfer but said the United States has coordinated with the Yemeni Government to ensure that the transfer took place under, quote, appropriate security measures.

There is an ongoing and very real concern about detainees returning to terrorism. According to data from the Department of Defense, at least 15 percent of former Guantanamo detainees have returned to terrorist activity. The 15 percent that have returned to terrorism following release were merely those detainees who were perceived to be low security risks. That's why they were released years ago. The detainees pending release now are the worst of the worst. Their recidivism rate may be much higher than 15 percent.

If these detainees are to be transferred, they should go only to governments that are willing and able to try, detain, rehabilitate or monitor them. Yemen does not meet that standard. An economic crisis, domestic security challenges, and Islamic terrorism are right now threatening to overwhelm the Yemeni Government. The FBI director recently highlighted Yemen as an area of persistent al Qaeda activity. Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula openly advertises their intent to attack the United States and our overseas interests, and is able to work in

relative freedom in Yemen. Counterterrorism measures in Saudi Arabia have forced extremists to seek refuge abroad, and many have relocated to Yemen's ungoverned areas. Known al Qaeda terrorists, including USS *Cole* bombers, have escaped from prison in Yemen to return to terrorism. The Christian Science Monitor reported last month of the rising threat to Saudi Arabia from the deteriorating security situation in Yemen. Saudi police prevented a bomb attack on October 13, and one of the perpetrators was a former Guantanamo detainee who entered the country from Yemen.

The bottom line is that terrorist detainees should not be sent to Yemen where al Qaeda operates freely and the government appears unable to control their actions and movements. Reuters has reported that the Obama administration has already cleared 75 of the remaining detainees for transfer abroad, and that includes 26 detainees from Yemen. Based on what we know, this administration is planning to send more, perhaps many more, detainees to this lawless country, increasing the risk of future terrorist attacks on Americans.

The administration should immediately terminate the return of detainees to Yemen, and the congressional committees of jurisdiction should investigate and demand a full justification. The release of any detainee to Yemen represents a potentially dangerous threat to the United States and U.S. citizens, both military and civilian.

As of now, the administration has gone down a dangerous road, and Congress is idly allowing them to make these misguided decisions.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LUJÁN) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

The prophet Isaiah has said, "God will destroy death forever; the Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; the reproach of His people He will remove from over the Earth, for the Lord has spoken."

O, God, source of forgiveness and the salvation of all, hear our prayer today as we call to mind all those who have served in the House of Representatives

in the past and who are departed from this world. Forgive their offenses as well as their omissions now, and reward them for all their efforts in public service on behalf of others.

Because You are the glory of believers, the life of the just and the consolation for all who mourn, Lord, grant Your peace to all the faithful departed that they may now enter Your eternal kingdom where You live and reign forever and ever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WALZ led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

DON'T BE FOOLED BY THE PELOSI-CARE HEALTH BILL

(Mr. BOOZMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, don't be fooled by the introduction of the newest health care bill supported by Speaker PELOSI. It is no more than the same bill millions of Americans spoke against in August but reintroduced with a different name and a different number.

No matter what it is called, the disguise hasn't tricked the residents of the Third District of Arkansas. Over the weekend, I received over 200 e-mails, and the overwhelming majority of those are from my constituents who are very much in opposition to this plan.

Instead of creating taxes, entitlement programs and redtape to reform health care, we need to let families and businesses buy health insurance across State lines; allow small businesses to pool together to buy health insurance at a lower cost; and end lawsuits that contribute to the costs because of doctors being forced to practice defensive medicine.

Mr. Speaker, we can and need to do a better job for the American people. Let's create real reform, not more problems to fix down the road.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. COLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise again today to speak against the Democrats' proposed health care plan. Frankly, it's hard to understand who my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are listening to. Certainly, it's not my constituents.

Their concerns, like those of millions of Americans, have been ignored as this bill has been written. The same provisions that caused the concerns and the fears that I heard in August town hall meetings are still in the "new bill."

Overwhelmingly, the American people have said "no" to government-run health insurance, but it's still in the bill. Also in the "new bill" are the same higher taxes for employers and individuals, taxes which will kill jobs. These are the very employers and individuals suffering from double-digit unemployment in many States today.

Maybe after several months, Mr. Speaker, some have found it easy to forget what they heard in August, but I haven't. This new bill is just more of the same, more backroom-brokered deals deciding the fate of millions of Americans. The only noticeable change in this bill is the addition of an extra 1,000 pages or so.

Americans deserve health care reform. Hopefully, they will get it.

THE PELOSI PLAN FOR THE GOVERNMENT TAKEOVER OF HEALTH CARE

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, now comes the Pelosi plan for the government takeover of health care. It is a freight train of runaway spending, bloated bureaucracy, mandates, and higher taxes. If the liberals in Washington, D.C. have their way, they will forever change the relationship between government and we, the people, as it pertains to the health care of this Nation.

Now, the Republicans in Congress who are standing in the gap can't do this alone, but I often tell my colleagues: a minority in Congress plus the American people equals a majority. We, the people, have the power to stop the Pelosi health care plan in an effort to nationalize one-sixth of our Nation's economy. We, the people, have the ability to protect the finest health care system the world has ever known and to demand real health care reform that will reduce the cost of health care without growing government.

I appeal to my fellow Americans, not as Republicans or Democrats: if you cherish freedom, if you fear the crushing weight of Big Government, debt, mandates, and taxes, this is your moment. Now is your time; let your voice be heard.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following commu-

nication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 30, 2009.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, The Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on October 30, 2009, at 9:33 a.m.:

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 1299.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3606.

That the Senate concurred to the House amendment to the bill S. 1929.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bills were signed by the Speaker on Friday, October 30, 2009:

H.R. 2996, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes;

H.R. 3606, to amend the Truth in Lending Act to make a technical correction to an amendment made by the Credit CARD Act of 2009;

S. 1929, to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

MILITARY SPOUSES RESIDENCY RELIEF ACT

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 475) to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to guarantee the equity of spouses of military personnel with regard to matters of residency, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 475

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Military Spouses Residency Relief Act".

SEC. 2. GUARANTEE OF RESIDENCY FOR SPOUSES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL FOR VOTING PURPOSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 705 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 595) is amended—

(1) by striking “For” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—For”;

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b) SPOUSES.—For the purposes of voting for any Federal office (as defined in section 301 of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 431)) or a State or local office, a person who is absent from a State because the person is accompanying the person's spouse who is absent from that same State in compliance with military or naval orders shall not, solely by reason of that absence—

“(1) be deemed to have lost a residence or domicile in that State, without regard to whether or not the person intends to return to that State;

“(2) be deemed to have acquired a residence or domicile in any other State; or

“(3) be deemed to have become a resident in or a resident of any other State.”; and

(3) in the section heading, by inserting “AND SPOUSES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL” before the period at the end.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501) is amended by striking the item relating to section 705 and inserting the following new item:

“Sec. 705. Guarantee of residency for military personnel and spouses of military personnel.”.

(c) APPLICATION.—Subsection (b) of section 705 of such Act (50 U.S.C. App. 595), as added by subsection (a) of this section, shall apply with respect to absences from States described in such subsection (b) on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, regardless of the date of the military or naval order concerned.

SEC. 3. DETERMINATION FOR TAX PURPOSES OF RESIDENCE OF SPOUSES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 511 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 571) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “A servicemember” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A servicemember”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) SPOUSES.—A spouse of a servicemember shall neither lose nor acquire a residence or domicile for purposes of taxation with respect to the person, personal property, or income of the spouse by reason of being absent or present in any tax jurisdiction of the United States solely to be with the servicemember in compliance with the servicemember's military orders if the residence or domicile, as the case may be, is the same for the servicemember and the spouse.”;

(2) by redesignating subsections (c), (d), (e), and (f) as subsections (d), (e), (f), and (g), respectively;

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

“(c) INCOME OF A MILITARY SPOUSE.—Income for services performed by the spouse of a servicemember shall not be deemed to be income for services performed or from sources within a tax jurisdiction of the United States if the spouse is not a resident or domiciliary of the jurisdiction in which the income is earned because the spouse is in the jurisdiction solely to be with the servicemember serving in compliance with military orders.”; and

(4) in subsection (d), as redesignated by paragraph (2)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “or the spouse of a servicemember” after “The personal property of a servicemember”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “or the spouse's” after “servicemember's”.

(b) APPLICATION.—Subsections (a)(2) and (c) of section 511 of such Act (50 U.S.C. App. 571), as added by subsection (a) of this section, and the amendments made to such section 511 by subsection (a)(4) of this section, shall apply with respect to any return of State or local income tax filed for any taxable year beginning with the taxable year that includes the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. SUSPENSION OF LAND RIGHTS RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT FOR SPOUSES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 508 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 568) is amended in subsection (b) by inserting “or the spouse of such servicemember” after “a servicemember in military service”.

(b) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to servicemembers in military service (as defined in section 101 of such Act (50 U.S.C. App. 511)) on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Senator RICHARD BURR of North Carolina for introducing Senate bill 475, the Military Spouses Residency Relief Act. The House version of this legislation was introduced by Mr. CARTER of Texas.

As many of my colleagues know, the sacrifices that military children and spouses have to make in order to stay as one united family are difficult. This is especially true at a time when our country is fighting to protect freedom at home and abroad.

Senate bill 475 seeks to provide military spouses with the option to keep the same voting rights and tax conditions as afforded in their home States or to allow them to change to the new States where they will be reunited with a servicemember.

A military spouse who often accompanies a servicemember from one duty station to another is required to pay income and personal property taxes of the State in which they currently reside. On the other hand, the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act provides our men and women in uniform the option of paying taxes to the States where they originated prior to military service or to pay taxes to the States in which they currently reside due to military service, lessening the need to hire accountants to review tax regulations of their home States, which can at times be multiple States. This will help keep their tax preparation simple and familiar, reducing the stress family members encounter when filing State taxes.

Mr. Speaker, the intent of this legislation is very simple. We need to recog-

nize that military families serve too. It is only fitting to provide military spouses with the ability to retain certain State residency benefits which are already afforded to our men and women in uniform under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

Again, I would like to thank my colleagues in the Senate for working on this legislation so we may provide relief for our military families. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. STEARNS. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. STEARNS. I notice that the gentleman who is advocating on the Democrats' side is not a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, at least not to my knowledge.

Under the rules of the House, is this appropriate that a Member who is not on the committee in which the bill has passed through and has jurisdiction is the advocate for the Democrats in this case?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Recognition of the motion is in the discretion of the Chair.

Mr. STEARNS. So, if I understand the Speaker, the Chair, at his discretion, can decide who can be the spokesman for the bill even if the person is not on the committee?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair may exercise discretion in recognizing Members to offer such motions.

Mr. STEARNS. A further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. STEARNS. Is this customary, or is this an unusual situation? I don't need a long dissertation, just a “yes” or “no” as to whether it is customary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The discretion of the chair in recognizing Members is well settled.

Mr. STEARNS. So what you are saying is you can do it, but you are not willing to answer the question as to whether this is customary or not, because I've been here 20 years, and I have not seen this in the 20 years I have been here.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is customary that the chair use his discretion in recognizing Members to offer such motions.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I rise in support of S. 475, the Military Spouses Residency Relief Act.

I want to thank the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Senator BURR, for sponsoring this legislation. I also want to recognize and thank Mr. JOHN CARTER of Texas for his support on this issue by introducing the companion House bill, H.R. 1182. It has 206 bipartisan cosponsors, and I am proud to be one of those.

Mr. Speaker, by its very nature, military service requires a significant sacrifice in terms of the quality of family life, especially of the spouses of servicemembers. Because servicemembers are routinely subject to transfer within and outside the continental United States, often with very short notice, spouses often find it difficult to obtain and/or to retain suitable employment.

However, military spouses are not covered by the same residency protections that are available to the servicemembers under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. As a result, State laws regarding taxation, voting and ownership of property are often applied differently to the spouse and the servicemember. The SCRA allows servicemembers to determine their permanent residencies or domiciliaries. By allowing this, SCRA protects servicemembers from State taxation, property ownership, and voting laws that are not in their permanent residencies or domiciliaries.

Because the law is silent to spouses in these matters, they do not receive the same protection as servicemembers. Therefore, they can be subject to States which aggressively seek to impose residency related to income and property ownership laws, despite, my colleagues, the fact that they no longer reside in the States due to the spouses' military orders.

S. 475 addresses this issue by giving military spouses a choice to use either their current addresses where they are stationed because of their spouses' military orders or their permanent addresses to determine their residencies or domiciliaries for voting in any municipal, State, or Federal election.

Simply, the bill would allow spouses to determine their residencies in the same manner as servicemembers regarding taxation, voting, and ownership of property with respect to land-use rights on Federal owned or controlled land in the same manner as servicemembers under section 508 of SCRA.

My colleagues, this is a commonsense solution to give military spouses who have already sacrificed so much for the Nation the protection that servicemembers have when it comes to local residency laws related to taxation and voting.

So, again, I want to compliment Senator BURR and also, for the companion bill in the House, Mr. CARTER of Texas, for their sponsorship of this bill; and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1415

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

I reserve the balance of my time

Mr. STEARNS. It's my honor to yield as much time as he may consume to the author of the companion bill, which is H.R. 1182, the sponsor, Mr. JOHN CARTER of Texas.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, this is an exciting day for me. I was the author of

this bill. I have been dealing with the gentlewomen who brought this to my attention a long time ago, and it's coming to fruition today, and I am pleased and honored.

I am the author of the identical companion bill, H.R. 1182. I represent Fort Hood, Texas, which is a pretty good-sized military base in the United States, the largest. I rise in support of these military spouses for this Military Spouses Residency Relief Act.

First, I want to thank everyone who has worked on this bill and worked hard to bring it to this point. Senator BURR and Senator FEINSTEIN over on the Senate side took up this cause and shepherded it and got it through the Senate, and this past-due reform is now before us today. I would also like to thank Chairman FILNER for supporting our military spouses and requesting the bill be taken up today.

We greatly appreciate all the VSOs who lent their support, including the Military Officers Association of America, the Air Force Sergeants Association, AMVETS, the VFW, and the Military Spouse Business Association. Above all, I would like to thank all the military spouses who have encouraged me and who encourage their Representatives and Senators to support this bill.

Finally, I would like to extend a very special thanks to Rebecca Poynter and Joanna Williamson, two entrepreneurial spouses who brought this issue to me and devoted so much of their time working with all the Members that are involved to get this bill passed. This is their baby, and they should be recognized.

This small measure will provide invaluable relief to numerous military spouses who regularly uproot their entire lives to accommodate our Armed Forces. When I first heard this story, I was shocked that there was such a difference between husband and wife, the two spouses, as it relates to the benefits we give them in the military.

The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act provides for basic civil relief to our men and women of the armed services in exchange for their voluntary service. These range from relief from adjudication while deployed in combat to maintaining a single State of domicile, regardless of where their military orders may send them.

This State of domicile provides an important stability for our soldiers, airmen, marines, and sailors. Though their orders may send them to numerous places or numerous States, they are able to simplify their State income tax requirements, maintain their property titles, and continue to vote for their Member of Congress or their elected official back home. Without SCRA protections, the servicemembers would have to deal with all those every time they move to military installations located in different States.

But spouses do have to deal with those every time they move to different States, and the spouses deal

with these stresses even while faced with the challenge of moving, finding schools for children, balancing some unsupported relocation costs and the loss of a spouse's earnings as they leave the job to join the servicemember.

This bill would amend the SCRA to allow military spouses to claim the same domicile as the servicemember for the purpose of State income and property taxes, as well as voter registration. Spouses could elect to stand united with their spouse, not only in support of our country, but in sharing the same State as the home base. This reform would prevent a military family from suddenly losing up to 10 percent of their income if they are called upon to relocate to a different State. This is a significant loss of income that occurs as a direct result of governmental orders.

S. 475 would also provide the impetus for military spouses to put their names on deeds and titles, which would build and strengthen their own credit and further ensure their legal protection.

This Veterans Day, which is coming up the 11th of this month, next week, I will ask each and every one of us to not only remember our servicemembers current and past, but take a moment to remember the military spouses who have sacrificed for and supported our soldiers.

Keeping that in mind, I ask my colleagues to grant this valuable relief to our military families and to support the passage of the Military Spouses Residency Relief Act.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STEARNS. We have no further speakers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 475.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to unanimously support S. 475.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 475.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UNITED STATES SUBMARINE
FORCE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 773) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the United States Submarine Force.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 773

Whereas 100 years ago, American naval officials who witnessed a submarine, the "Holland VI", submerge and surface in the Potomac River knew this was the first successful United States submarine that would inspire the powerful undersea fighting force that would contribute so much to the United States victory in World War II;

Whereas during World War II, the United States Submarine Force served with honor and valor to protect and preserve the freedoms of the United States, as well as those of the allies of the United States;

Whereas the War in the Pacific could not have been won without the efforts of the United States Submarine Force;

Whereas during World War II, the United States Submarine Force comprised less than two percent of the Navy's fleet;

Whereas during World War II, United States submariners were to suffocate Japan's military industry, cut its oil supply, starve it, and prevent mass troop movements by sea, all by sinking the Japanese merchant fleet on which it was so dependent as a nation of islands;

Whereas during World War II, United States submariners sank over 30 percent of the Japanese Navy including eight aircraft carriers, one battleship and 11 cruisers, and more importantly, the Submarine Force sank 1,300 Japanese merchant ships totaling approximately 5,000,000 tons, which was almost 60 percent of the Empire's total merchant ship losses;

Whereas losses inflicted by the United States Submarine Force contributed to the devastation of the Japanese industrial power that effectively eliminated the ability of the enemy to sustain combat forces and replace losses of ships and aircraft;

Whereas World War II diesel-electric submarines had limited underwater speed, range, and endurance and usually sailed on the surface, where they were vulnerable to enemy attack;

Whereas 52 American submarines were lost during World War II, 49 in the Pacific;

Whereas the United States Submarine Force suffered the highest percentage of losses of any branch of the Armed Services;

Whereas during World War II, approximately 3,500 submariners made the ultimate sacrifice;

Whereas United States submariners were going to war, trusting their lives to a weapon, the torpedo, that, particularly in 1942 through 1943, was unreliable, and could even turn against them by running erratically in a circular path;

Whereas submarines played both humane and special operations roles in their campaign against Japan, and in many of the hardest fought battles of the war, submarine crews rescued unlucky carrier pilots who ended up in the sea, like future United States President George H. W. Bush; and

Whereas members of the Submarine Forces, known as the "silent service", assumed the difficult task of pioneering a new way of fighting so as to protect the liberties and freedoms of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) is committed to promoting and sustaining the spirit of unity shared by members of the United States Submarine Force;

(2) is committed to paying tribute once again to the seven submariners who were awarded the Medal of Honor, including two who were awarded the medal posthumously;

(3) wishes to help keep alive the memory of the Submarine Force veterans and honor their service just as their fellow shipmates do at their gatherings by performing the ceremony known as the "Tolling of the Boats"; and

(4) is committed to keeping alive their memory so that the American people never forget their courage and sacrifice.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Just to the gentleman from Florida, your earlier inquiry, I apologize for not talking to you. The staff built in redundancies. Flying out of Minneapolis has been somewhat of a challenge recently, assuming they get to the airport in the original path, so the staff arranged to have another Member here.

Mr. STEARNS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALZ. Yes.

Mr. STEARNS. Let me just say how delighted I am to have the gentleman on the floor. Mr. WALZ is the highest NCO that has ever served in Congress. He was a command sergeant major, I think an E-9, so it is with a great deal of respect, for anybody who has served in the military like I have in the United States Air Force, that we look to gentlemen like Mr. WALZ.

We appreciate his participation on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. I am delighted he is here and is taking over this jurisdiction, which is important on these 13 bills.

Mr. WALZ. Well, I thank the gentleman for his kind words and, again, appreciate the tireless work he does for the veterans. It's a great testament, and the folks in Florida are lucky to have you there.

The United States Submarine Force was a vital component to winning the war in the Pacific during World War II. The war simply could not have been won without this powerful undersea fighting force.

Although the Submarine Force comprised a little less than 2 percent of the Navy's fleet during World War II, they played a crucial role in effectively eliminating up to 30 percent of the Imperial Japanese Navy, reducing Japan's ability to sustain their combat forces.

Day after day, the submariners entrusted their lives on unreliable torpedos to protect them as they fought to protect the liberties and freedom of the United States. For their courage and valor that runs deep, the United States Submarine Force should be

commended by the House of Representatives.

House Resolution 773 resolves that the House of Representatives is committed to keeping alive their memory so that the American people never forget their courage and sacrifice. We will give honor to the 52 American submarines that were lost during World War II and the 3,500 submariners who have made the ultimate sacrifice to protect the freedoms of this great Nation.

The seven brave submariners who were awarded the Medal of Honor are: John Cromwell, Samuel Dealey, Eugene Fluckey, Howard Gilmore, Richard O'Kane, Lawson Ramage and George Street. Their courageous fighting spirit going above and beyond the call of duty is recognized and highly respected. Servicemembers like them have set the example that our Armed Forces follow.

The contributions of the United States Submarine Force were momentous and critical to winning World War II. They exemplify the legacy of commitment to guard our freedom.

I support House Resolution 773 that expresses the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the United States Submarine Force. We should be committed to sustain our submariners force of spirit, unity, courage, and sacrifice they have given for this great Nation.

I also want to thank the gentleman from Arkansas for introducing this important piece of remembrance and commemoration.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I also rise in strong support of H. Res. 773, a resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the United States Submarine Force. This resolution honors these servicemembers who served their country during World War II in the most unique of circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague Mr. BOOZMAN of Arkansas, as mentioned earlier, for introducing this legislation, and I will shortly yield to him for further remarks on this resolution.

I want to thank the chairman, Mr. FILNER, and also Ranking Member BUYER for moving the bill so promptly to the floor for consideration.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 773.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. I continue to reserve my time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the author of the bill, Mr. BOOZMAN of Arkansas, for such time as he may consume.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 773, a resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the valiant service of the United States Submarine Force during World War II.

As we approach Veterans Day, it is fitting that the House honor Americans who serve their country under the most unique of circumstances.

Earlier this year, we honored those servicemembers who participated in the D-day operations. Yet there is another group who faced incredible challenges and danger to ensure that victory would be possible for the United States and our allies during World War II, the United States Submarine Force.

Mr. Speaker, it is a special individual who will climb into a tightly confined space and willingly go deep underwater to serve the Nation. Today's nuclear submarines are a high-tech marvel, able to submerge for months at a time, cruise beneath the polarized caps, and carry strategic and tactical weapons of unbelievable power. But that was not always the case.

The first submarine used for military purposes was built in 1776 by David Bushnell. His Turtle was a one-man wooden submarine powered by hand-turned propellers and was used during the American Revolution against British warships.

During the Civil War, the use of submarines came into play again when the Union fielded the French-designed Alligator, which was the first U.S. Navy submarine to feature compressed air for air supply. The Confederacy also fielded several human-powered submarines, including the Hunley in Charleston Harbor.

Submarines saw much greater use during World War I, but it wasn't until World War II that the technological development of submarines enabled them to become a capable and feared weapons system.

During the Second World War, 314 submarines served in the United States Navy, including many built at the end of World War I. This force comprised less than 2 percent of the U.S. Navy ships, but they sank over 30 percent of Japan's navy, including eight aircraft carriers. More important, American submarines virtually strangled the Japanese economy by sinking almost 5 billion tons of shipping, over 60 percent of the Japanese merchant marine. Serving in many of the hardest fought battles of the war as part of the "silent service," the submarine crews rescued unlucky carrier pilots who ended up in the sea, like the future President of the United States, George H.W. Bush.

But victory at sea did not come cheaply. The Submarine Force lost 52 boats and 3,506 men during World War II. Just a few weeks ago, I had the good fortune of meeting a number of our World War II veterans from northwest Arkansas as they left the airport to visit Washington, DC, as part of the Honor Flight program. These brave men, many of whom were just boys at the time, answered the call of duty and changed the course of history through their selfless action and love for their country.

It was also a great honor to be able to attend the decommissioning cere-

mony for World War II Submarine Veterans, Diamond Chapter, hosted by the USS Snook Base of the United States Submarine Veterans in Rogers, Arkansas, last month. There, I had the privilege to recognize many of Arkansas' surviving submarine veterans and thank them for their efforts firsthand.

□ 1430

A special thanks goes to former submariner Pete Rathmell for making the event happen.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for the opportunity to honor the "silent service" of World War II. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. SESTAK for his leadership in working with me on this legislation, and express my appreciation for the support of all the other co-sponsors of the resolution.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H. Res. 773.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 773.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. BOOZMAN and Mr. SESTAK again, continuously on the forefront of making sure the respect shown to our veterans and the benefits that they have earned are there, and I urge my colleagues to unanimously support H. Res. 773.

I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 773.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VETERANS RETRAINING ACT OF 2009

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1168) to amend chapter 42 of title 38, United States Code, to provide certain veterans with employment training assistance, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1168

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Retraining Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. EMPLOYMENT TRAINING ASSISTANCE.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Chapter 42 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 4216. Employment Training Assistance for Unemployed Veterans.

"(a) *MONTHLY TRAINING ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE.*—Subject to the availability of appropriations for such purpose, the Secretary of Labor may pay to each covered veteran a monthly training assistance allowance under this section for each month that a covered veteran is enrolled in an employment and training program that teaches a skill in demand, as determined by the Secretary.

"(b) *AMOUNT.*—The amount of the training assistance allowance under this section is the amount equal to the monthly amount of the basic allowance for housing payable under section 403 of title 37 for a member of the Armed Forces with dependents in pay grade E-5 residing in the military housing area that encompasses all or the majority portion of the ZIP code area in which the veteran resides.

"(c) *DURATION.*—A covered veteran may receive training assistance under this section for not more than six months during each 10-year period beginning on the date in which the covered veteran first receives training allowance under this section.

"(d) *MOVING STIPEND.*—Subject to the availability of appropriations for such purpose, in addition to the training assistance allowance payable under subsection (a), the Secretary may reimburse each covered veteran, in an amount not to exceed \$5,000, for moving expenses related to the veteran's receipt of training for which an allowance is paid under this section.

"(e) *COVERED VETERAN DEFINED.*—In this section, the term 'covered veteran' means a veteran who is—

"(1) unemployed for a period of not less than four consecutive months at the time of applying for training assistance under this section;

"(2) able to successfully complete the employment and training program described in subsection (a), as determined by the Secretary; and

"(3) except as provided under this section, ineligible for education or training assistance under this title.

"(f) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.*—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$100,000,000 for each fiscal year."

(b) *CLERICAL AMENDMENT.*—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 42 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

"4216. Employment training assistance for unemployed veterans."

(c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—Section 4216 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to months beginning on or after the first day of fiscal year 2011.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, I thank my colleagues from Florida and Arkansas for introducing an incredibly important piece of legislation.

H.R. 1168 is a much-needed piece of legislation to address the job retraining needs of America's veterans. Just this month, the Department of Labor reported that more than 30,000 recently

discharged veterans have filed for unemployment insurance benefits. Furthermore, as of September 2009, the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated that 990,000 veterans were unemployed.

Mr. Speaker, these numbers are significant, and they demonstrate an immediate need to help our veterans receive the essential training needed to get their skills so they can be employed in a meaningful manner. We know the employment training programs can be effective in providing job counseling and retraining, an important part of successful transition to a civilian career.

H.R. 1168 goes one step further in support of veterans. The Veterans Retraining Act of 2009 would provide a stipend to veterans who are enrolled in employment and training programs to help cover living expenses and moving costs so veterans can move to an area where there is a demand for their newly acquired military skills.

This bill is good for the veteran, good for the underserved skill sector, and it is good for the country. Our veterans have invested in our country, and this legislation invests in our veterans.

H.R. 1168 is the result of continuously bipartisan work between the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee chairwoman, STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN, and the ranking member, Mr. BOOZMAN. I applaud both Mr. BOOZMAN and Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN for their leadership on the issue, their dedication to our veterans, and the example they set in the Veterans' Affairs Committee of bipartisan work for our veterans.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in support of this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I also rise in support of this bill, H.R. 1168, as amended, the Veterans Retraining Act of 2009. It is unfortunate this wasn't part of the stimulus package, because I think this could have been handled appropriately there. We have got a CBO estimate, but it is an authorization bill, and it is not an appropriations bill. But I think this is the kind of thing that would have been very pertinent to the stimulus bill.

This would amend chapter 42 of title 38, United States Code, to provide eligible veterans with employment training assistance.

Mr. Speaker, helping our returning veterans get back into the workforce is of the utmost importance. I believe this legislation will further that cause when, because of the recession, the unemployment level, particularly among veterans, continues to reach unacceptable levels.

I will be yielding shortly to the author of the bill, Mr. BOOZMAN, for a fuller explanation, but I would like to thank him for offering this bill, and also, as Mr. WALZ had mentioned, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN and the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity for moving this bill through the legislative process, and also thank the

chairman and the ranking member for their support.

We must do more, obviously, to help our veterans today who have been hit especially hard by these tough economic times, particularly when they come back from Iraq or Afghanistan.

So I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1168, as amended.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure at this time to yield such time as she may consume to the coauthor of this bill, a tireless and effective advocate for our veterans and my colleague from right next door in South Dakota, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN.

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding, for his service to our country, and for his tireless advocacy on behalf our Nation's veterans.

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1168, the Veterans Retraining Act of 2009, which the Veterans' Affairs Economic Opportunity Subcommittee passed on October 8 and the full committee approved last week. I would like to thank the ranking member of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee, Mr. BOOZMAN, for his outstanding leadership in introducing this important legislation, and full committee Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for their leadership as well and their support of this legislation.

The bill offers important updates to the employment training assistance available to veterans. It directs the Secretary of Labor to provide a monthly assistance allowance to veterans who are enrolled in an employment and training program. It teaches a skill in demand.

In addition, the veteran would be eligible to receive a monthly housing allowance, as well as a moving stipend of up to \$5,000 for moving expenses directly related to the receipt of this training. In order to be eligible for this assistance, veterans must be unemployed for no less than four months and ineligible for other education and training assistance.

Employment assistance is one of the essential benefits that our country gives its veterans. These benefits help our veterans adjust to life outside of the military and successfully transfer the skills and experience they acquired while serving in the Armed Forces to the civilian job force.

Again, I want to thank Chairman FILNER and particularly the hard work of Ranking Member BOOZMAN for their support on this issue, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of the bill, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN).

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman FILNER, Chairwoman HERSETH SANDLIN and Ranking Member BUYER for bringing H.R. 1168, as amended, the Veterans Retraining Act of 2009, to the floor.

I introduced this bill to encourage veterans to enroll in job training programs offered by the Department of Labor that train participants for jobs in the new economy.

In 2002, Congress enacted the Jobs for Veterans Act which gave covered veterans priority access to job training programs sponsored by the Department of Labor. Unfortunately, just as in other sectors of the workforce, veterans too have been forced to join the lines of the unemployed.

According to Bureau of Labor Statistics data for September 2009, 990,000 veterans were out of work, for an unemployment rate of 8.3 percent, the highest in decades. Of that number, nearly 600,000 were between the ages of 35 and 64, the years of prime earning power as well as peak financial obligations. These is also the group of veterans who no longer have access to any VA education or training programs. So while veterans may have priority access to training programs, the need to provide some income to the family while training is the prime goal of H.R. 1168, as amended.

To meet that goal, H.R. 1168, as amended, authorizes \$100 million per year to provide a living stipend and moving assistance to veterans who have been unemployed for at least 4 months, who are not eligible for training or education under title 38, and are enrolled in a U.S. Department of Labor retraining program. The amount of the living stipend would mirror that given to post-9/11 GI Bill participants.

The moving assistance is intended to help a newly trained veteran who lives in an area of high unemployment to move to an area where there is a demand for the veteran's skills. It is my hope that H.R. 1168, as amended, will be a step towards providing veterans with new skill sets and the ability to locate where the jobs are plentiful.

I want to especially thank Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN for her help and leadership on this bill and just in general her leadership on our subcommittee. I also appreciate Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for bringing this bill forward to the floor.

As always, I want to thank the staff for your efforts. We don't do that enough. We really appreciate your efforts on behalf of our veterans and the tremendous job that you are doing.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, again, thank you to both our chairwoman and our ranking member for a wonderful and timely piece of legislation.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1168, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to unanimously support H.R. 1168.

I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1168, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

LOUISIANA HONORAIR DAY

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 828) to recognize October 24, 2009, the 20th chartered flight of World War II veterans through Louisiana HonorAir, as "Louisiana HonorAir Day," and to honor the invaluable service and dedication of the World War II veterans to our Nation.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 828

Whereas in late 2006, T.D. Smith of Louisiana founded Louisiana HonorAir, a non-profit organization, which charters flights for World War II veterans on an all-expenses-paid, day-long trip from Louisiana to Washington, DC, to see the World War II Memorial, the Marine Corps Memorial, and to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier;

Whereas since its first flight out of Lafayette, Louisiana in early 2007, Louisiana HonorAir has flown close to 2,000 World War II veterans to Washington, DC, to be honored for their invaluable service, sacrifice, and dedication to our Nation;

Whereas approximately 100 to 130 World War II veterans are selected by Louisiana HonorAir for each flight on a first-come-first-served basis;

Whereas Louisiana HonorAir is run by volunteers and sustained by donations and State grants;

Whereas before Louisiana HonorAir culminates in Lafayette, Louisiana, on April 10, 2010, its last three flights will be chartered from New Orleans, Louisiana, on September 26, October 10, and October 24, 2009;

Whereas the 100th chartered flight of World War II veterans aboard U.S. Airways occurs during Louisiana HonorAir's October 10, 2009, flight out of New Orleans, Louisiana, home to the National World War II Museum;

Whereas, October 24, 2009, marks the 20th chartered flight of World War II veterans through Louisiana HonorAir;

Whereas with the average World War II veteran being 86 years old and becoming too ill to visit the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC, there are not many opportunities left to honor them for their service: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes Louisiana HonorAir for its 20 chartered flights of World War II veterans to Washington, DC, to visit the National World War II Memorial, honors the invaluable service and dedication of the World War II veterans to our Nation, and supports the designation of a "Louisiana HonorAir Day".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New Orleans for putting this piece of legislation forward. This is an incredibly important program, and it is one that any of us who have had the incredible honor of being in the presence of our World War II veterans as they get a chance to return back to their memorial would say is really moving.

The Louisiana HonorAir's mission is to provide that every single Louisiana World War II veteran have the opportunity to view the World War II Memorial for the first time. As the home of the National World War II Museum, Louisiana holds deep roots in celebrating our World War II veterans community.

Louisiana HonorAir provides the veterans a chance to stand in the presence of the landmark that memorializes their service to this country. They also visit Arlington National Cemetery and lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The World War II Memorial and Arlington National Cemetery mark our country's gratitude for the heroic service our veterans have provided to the country. They are also a symbolic tie these veterans have to our country's history. This experience only lasts one day, but it hopefully stays in the hearts of our veterans and their loved ones forever.

This service provided by Louisiana HonorAir is an act of love for our World War II veterans. Operating solely on the efforts of volunteers and financial support from donors, Louisiana HonorAir is able to make these dreams possible at no cost to the veterans.

Because the youngest World War II veteran is 70 years old, and the average age of our veterans is 86, time is of the essence. Many of our last World War II veterans are becoming too ill to travel, and there are not many opportunities left to honor them for their service.

House Resolution 828 will recognize and celebrate Louisiana HonorAir's 20th chartered flight on October 24, 2009, Louisiana HonorAir Day.

□ 1445

We act on the limited chance to support our last surviving World War II veterans. Let's not forget them, and let's take advantage of every opportunity to celebrate their service to their country. With that, again, I

thank the gentleman for such an important resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I also rise in support of House Resolution 828, a resolution recognizing October 24, 2009, the 20th chartered flight of World War II veterans through the Louisiana HonorAir, as Louisiana HonorAir Day, and to honor the invaluable service and dedication of World War II veterans nationwide.

Founded in late 2006 by T.D. Smith of Louisiana, Louisiana HonorAir provides World War II veterans an all-expense-paid, day-long trip from Louisiana to Washington, D.C., to see the World War II Memorial, the Marine Corps Memorial, and to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. I want to congratulate them for their continued service to our Nation. Their flight on October 24, 2009, was the 20th Honor Flight organized by this organization, and I am sure it won't be the last.

I have also had the experience and privilege of honoring these Honor Flights in my congressional district. We've had four of these. Last week, in fact, we have just had one, and I will recognize that Senator Dole and Senator Libby Dole also were participants at the site to meet and greet these veterans as a tribute to them.

I know that I have been inspired by the veterans who have participated in honor flights from my district in Florida, and all Honor Flight Networks around our country deserve our support. Also on October 10, 2009, the 100th chartered flight of World War II veterans aboard U.S. Airways occurred during a Louisiana HonorAir Flight out of New Orleans, Louisiana, the home to the National World War II Museum. It is estimated by the National Honor Flight Network that over 42,000 veterans will have participated in honor flights by the end of this year. So I think it's a tribute to recognize this resolution, but it's also a tribute to my colleague Mr. CAO of Louisiana for introducing this resolution and honoring this worthy organization. I would like to thank both the chairman and the ranking member for moving this resolution so quickly, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. I have no further speakers, and reserve the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker I yield such time as he may consume to the author, Mr. CAO of Louisiana.

Mr. CAO. Thank you very much for allowing me to speak on behalf of my resolution.

I rise today in support of House Resolution 828, to designate October 24, 2009, as Louisiana HonorAir Day in honor of the invaluable service of World War II veterans to our Nation. October 24, 2009, marked the 20th charter flight of World War II veterans from Louisiana

to D.C. through Louisiana HonorAir to visit the National World War II Memorial. Louisiana HonorAir's mission is to provide every World War II veteran who is physically able to travel the opportunity to view the World War II Memorial for the first time. World War II veterans are granted a charter flight from Louisiana to Washington, D.C., for a day-long, all-expenses-paid-trip to visit the National World War II Memorial, the Marine Corps Memorial, the Iwo Jima Memorial and other memorials and to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The World War II Memorial was dedicated in 2004 for a generation whose youngest members are in their late seventies. Therefore, many of the men and women who fought and sacrificed for our country have not had the opportunity or ability to visit. Sadly, a few of the World War II veterans scheduled to go on the October 24 flight passed away or became too ill to travel and were, therefore, unable to be properly honored for their tremendous sacrifices.

As Louisiana HonorAir prepares to fly its final flight on April 10, 2010, I am proud that these last three fall flights were out of New Orleans, Louisiana, home to the National World War II Museum. Mr. Speaker, I had the great opportunity to welcome home several members of the veterans community on their flights back from Washington, D.C., 3 weeks ago, and I have to say that from the receptions that I have received and from the faces of the many members who came back from Washington, D.C., on that HonorAir flight, they were very grateful and honored to be able to participate in the program. Under the leadership of T.D. Smith, the Louisiana HonorAir reminds our Nation's World War II veterans how indebted we are to them for their service. As the son of a war veteran, I consider it a personal honor to sponsor this legislation, and I strongly urge my colleagues to vote in favor of House Resolution 828.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support our Armed Forces and veterans and fully realize the debt of gratitude that our nation owes the men and women who defend our country. Mindful of this commitment, I thank the World War II veterans for their commitment and unselfish service to America. I would especially like to thank the Louisiana HonorAir organization for their hard work and dedication to these veterans and recognize October 24, 2009 as "Louisiana HonorAir Day."

In 2007, Louisiana HonorAir began flying WWII veterans three hours on a chartered flight from Louisiana to our nation's Capital free of charge. In Washington, D.C., the groups toured the WWII Memorial, Korean Memorial and Vietnam Memorial and attended wreath laying ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. Then, as quickly as they came, the groups returned home to a hero's welcome in Louisiana where family and friends gathered to show their appreciation one more time. For many veterans, it was their first time to tour the WWII Memorial because of its recent con-

struction, while for others it was their only chance to see these sights dedicated to the great service they provided to our nation.

Having met many of these groups in Washington, I continue to be awestruck by the reactions of these brave men and women who stood up to tyranny in Europe and Asia. Many rarely talk about their service, instead, looking to happier times. However, in the company of others who nobly served, they are able to frankly discuss their experiences, share tearful stories and remember comrades missing or killed in action. I am grateful to have worked with Louisiana HonorAir and I salute them, as well as the courageous men and women who stood to protect America.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering the brave men and women who defended America and in commending Louisiana HonorAir by recognizing October 24, 2009 as "Louisiana HonorAir Day."

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 828.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New Orleans and urge my colleagues to unanimously support this important resolution, H. Res. 828.

I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 828.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VETERANS' SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE AND SERVICEMEMBERS PROTECTION ACT OF 2009

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3949) to amend title 38, United States Code, and the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, to make certain improvements in the laws relating to benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3949

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Veterans' Small Business Assistance and Servicemembers Protection Act of 2009".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. References to title 38, United States Code.

TITLE I—SMALL BUSINESS AND EDUCATION MATTERS

Sec. 101. Clarification of responsibility of Secretary of Veterans Affairs to verify small business ownership.

Sec. 102. Reauthorization of Veterans' Advisory Committee on Education.

TITLE II—SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT MATTERS

Sec. 201. Termination of service contracts.

Sec. 202. Residential and motor vehicle leases.

Sec. 203. Enforcement by the Attorney General and by private right of action.

TITLE III—OTHER BENEFITS MATTERS

Sec. 301. Improvement of outreach activities within Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 302. Visual impairment and orientation and mobility professionals education assistance program.

Sec. 303. Interment in national cemeteries of parents of certain deceased veterans.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 38, United States Code.

TITLE I—SMALL BUSINESS AND EDUCATION MATTERS

SEC. 101. CLARIFICATION OF RESPONSIBILITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO VERIFY SMALL BUSINESS OWNERSHIP.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the "Veterans Small Business Verification Act".

(b) CLARIFICATION OF RESPONSIBILITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO VERIFY SMALL BUSINESS OWNERSHIP.—

(1) CLARIFICATION.—Section 8127(f) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by inserting "(A)" before "To be eligible";

(ii) by inserting after "or the veteran." the following new sentence: "Application for inclusion in the database shall constitute permission under section 552a of title 5 (commonly referred to as the Privacy Act) for the Secretary to access such personal information maintained by the Secretary as may be necessary to verify the information contained in the application."; and

(iii) by inserting after the sentence added by subparagraph (B) the following new subparagraph:

"(B) If the Secretary receives an application for inclusion in the database from an individual whose status as a veteran cannot be verified because the Secretary does not maintain information with respect to the veteran status of the individual, the Secretary may not include the small business concern owned or controlled by the individual in the database maintained by the Secretary until the Secretary receives such information as may be necessary to verify that the individual is a veteran."; and

(B) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following new paragraph (4):

"(4) No small business concern may be listed in the database until the Secretary has verified that—

“(A) the small business concern is owned and controlled by veterans; and

“(B) in the case of a small business concern for which the person who owns or controls the concern indicates that the person is a veteran with a service-connected disability, that the person is a veteran with a service-connected disability.”.

(2) **APPLICABILITY.**—In the case of a small business concern included in the database as of the date of the enactment of this Act for which, as of such date, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has not verified the status of such concern in accordance with paragraph (4) of subsection (f) of section 8127 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a), not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall notify the person who owns or controls the concern that—

(A) the Secretary is required to verify the status of the concern in accordance with such paragraph;

(B) verification of such status shall require that the person who owns or controls the concern apply for inclusion in the database in accordance with such subsection, as so amended;

(C) application for inclusion in the database shall constitute permission under section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Privacy Act), for the Secretary to access such personal information maintained by the Secretary as may be necessary to verify the information contained in the application; and

(D) the person who owns or controls the concern must submit to the Secretary an affirmative acknowledgment of the requirement under paragraph (3) within 90 days of receiving the Secretary's notice of such requirement or the concern shall be removed from the database.

SEC. 102. REAUTHORIZATION OF VETERANS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

Section 3692(c) is amended by striking “December 31, 2009” and inserting “December 31, 2015”.

TITLE II—SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT MATTERS

SEC. 201. TERMINATION OF SERVICE CONTRACTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 305A of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 535a) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 305A. TERMINATION OF SERVICE CONTRACTS.

“(a) **TERMINATION BY SERVICEMEMBER.**—A servicemember may terminate a contract described in subsection (c) at any time after the date the servicemember receives military orders—

“(1) to deploy with a military unit, or as an individual, in support of a contingency operation for a period of not less than 90 days; or

“(2) for a change of permanent station to a location that does not support the contract.

“(b) **SPECIAL RULE FOR CELLULAR OR TELEPHONE EXCHANGE SERVICE.**—In any case in which a contract being terminated under subsection (a) or (d) is for cellular telephone service or telephone exchange service, the servicemember may keep, to the extent practicable and in accordance with applicable law, the telephone number the servicemember has under the contract for a period not to exceed 90 days after the period of deployment or change of permanent station has concluded.

“(c) **COVERED CONTRACTS.**—This section applies to a contract for cellular telephone service, telephone exchange service, multichannel video programming service, Internet access service, or residential utility service involving the provision of water, electricity, home heating oil, or natural gas.

“(d) **FAMILY PLANS.**—In the case of a contract for cellular telephone service entered

into by any individual in which a servicemember is a designated beneficiary of such contract, the individual may terminate such contract—

“(1) with respect to the servicemember if the servicemember is eligible to terminate contracts pursuant to subsection (a); and

“(2) with respect to all of the designated beneficiaries of such contract if all such beneficiaries accompany the servicemember in a change of permanent station to a location that does not support the contract.

“(e) **MANNER OF TERMINATION.**—Termination of a contract under subsection (a) or (d) shall be made by delivery of a written notice of such termination and a copy of the servicemember's military orders to the service provider, delivered—

“(1) by hand delivery;

“(2) by private business carrier;

“(3) by facsimile; or

“(4) by United States mail, addressed as designated by the service provider, return receipt requested, with sufficient postage.

“(f) **DATE OF CONTRACT TERMINATION.**—Termination of a contract under subsection (a) or (d) is effective as of the date on which the notice under subsection (e) is delivered.

“(g) **OTHER OBLIGATIONS AND LIABILITIES.**—The service provider under the contract may not impose an early termination charge, but any tax or any other obligation or liability of the servicemember that, in accordance with the terms of the contract, is due and unpaid or unperformed at the time of termination of the contract shall be paid or performed by the servicemember. If the servicemember re-subscribes to the service provided under a covered contract in the 90-day period after the period of deployment or change of permanent station has concluded, the service provider may not impose a charge for reinstating service, other than a charge to cover any cost of installing or acquiring new equipment that existing customers received, and for which such customers paid a similar charge, during such period.

“(h) **RETURN OF ADVANCE PAYMENTS.**—Not later than 60 days after the effective date of the termination of the contract, the service provider shall refund to the servicemember any fee or other amount to the extent paid for a period extending after such date, except for the remainder of the monthly or similar billing period in which the termination occurs if it is not reasonably possible to determine a pro-rata amount for such remainder.

“(i) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘cellular telephone service’ means commercial mobile service, as that term is defined in section 332(d) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332(d)).

“(2) The term ‘contingency operation’ has the meaning given that term by section 101(a)(13) of title 10, United States Code.

“(3) The term ‘Internet access service’ has the meaning given that term under section 231(e)(4) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 231(e)(4)).

“(4) The term ‘multichannel video programming service’ means video programming service provided by a multichannel video programming distributor, as such term is defined in section 602(13) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 602(13)).

“(5) The term ‘telephone exchange service’ has the meaning given that term under section 3 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 153).”.

(b) **TECHNICAL AMENDMENT TO CONFORM HEADING OF TITLE III TO THE CONTENTS OF THE TITLE.**—The heading for title III of such Act is amended by inserting “, **SERVICE CONTRACTS**” after “**LEASES**”.

(c) **CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.**—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act is amended—

(1) by striking the item relating to title III and inserting the following new item:

“**TITLE III—RENT, INSTALLMENT CONTRACTS, MORTGAGES, LIENS, ASSIGNMENT, LEASES, SERVICE CONTRACTS**”; AND

(2) by striking the item relating to section 305A and inserting the following new item:

“**Sec. 305A. Termination of service contracts.**”.

SEC. 202. RESIDENTIAL AND MOTOR VEHICLE LEASES.

Subsection (e) of section 305 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 535) is amended to read as follows:

“(e) **ARREARAGES AND OTHER OBLIGATIONS AND LIABILITIES.**—

“(1) **LEASES OF PREMISES.**—Rent amounts for a lease described in subsection (b)(1) that are unpaid for the period preceding the effective date of the lease termination shall be paid on a prorated basis. The lessor may not impose an early termination charge, but any taxes, summonses, or other obligations and liabilities of the lessee in accordance with the terms of the lease, including reasonable charges to the lessee for excess wear, that are due and unpaid at the time of termination of the lease shall be paid by the lessee.

“(2) **LEASES OF MOTOR VEHICLES.**—Lease amounts for a lease described in subsection (b)(2) that are unpaid for the period preceding the effective date of the lease termination shall be paid on a prorated basis. The lessor may not impose an early termination charge, but any taxes, summonses, title and registration fees, or other obligations and liabilities of the lessee in accordance with the terms of the lease, including reasonable charges to the lessee for excess wear or use and mileage, that are due and unpaid at the time of termination of the lease shall be paid by the lessee.”.

SEC. 203. ENFORCEMENT BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND BY PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new title:

“TITLE VIII—CIVIL LIABILITY

“SEC. 801. ENFORCEMENT BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

“(a) **CIVIL ACTION.**—The Attorney General may commence a civil action in any appropriate United States district court against any person who—

“(1) engages in a pattern or practice of violating this Act; or

“(2) engages in a violation of this Act that raises an issue of significant public importance.

“(b) **RELIEF.**—In a civil action commenced under subsection (a), the court may—

“(1) grant any appropriate equitable or declaratory relief with respect to the violation;

“(2) award all other appropriate relief, including monetary damages, to any person aggrieved by the violation; and

“(3) may, to vindicate the public interest, assess a civil penalty—

“(A) in an amount not exceeding \$55,000 for a first violation; and

“(B) in an amount not exceeding \$110,000 for any subsequent violation.

“(c) **INTERVENTION.**—Upon timely application, a person aggrieved by a violation with respect to which the civil action is commenced may intervene in such action, and may obtain such appropriate relief as the person could obtain in a civil action under section 802 with respect to that violation, along with costs and a reasonable attorney fee.

“SEC. 802. PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Any person aggrieved by a violation of this Act may in a civil action—

“(1) obtain any appropriate equitable or declaratory relief with respect to the violation; and

“(2) recover all other appropriate relief, including monetary damages.

“(b) COSTS AND ATTORNEY FEES.—The court may award to a servicemember who prevails in an action brought under subsection (a) the costs of the action, including a reasonable attorney fee.

“SEC. 803. PRESERVATION OF REMEDIES.

“Nothing in section 801 or 802 shall be construed to preclude or limit any remedy otherwise available under other law, including consequential and punitive damages.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such Act is further amended as follows:

(1) Section 207 (50 U.S.C. App. 527) is amended by striking subsection (f).

(2) Section 301(c) (50 U.S.C. App. 531(c)) is amended to read as follows:

“(c) MISDEMEANOR.—Except as provided in subsection (a), a person who knowingly takes part in an eviction or distress described in subsection (a), or who knowingly attempts to do so, shall be fined as provided in title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.”.

(3) Section 302(b) (50 U.S.C. App. 532(b)) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) MISDEMEANOR.—A person who knowingly resumes possession of property in violation of subsection (a), or in violation of section 107 of this Act, or who knowingly attempts to do so, shall be fined as provided in title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.”.

(4) Section 303(d) (50 U.S.C. App. 533(d)) is amended to read as follows:

“(d) MISDEMEANOR.—A person who knowingly makes or causes to be made a sale, foreclosure, or seizure of property that is prohibited by subsection (c), or who knowingly attempts to do so, shall be fined as provided in title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.”.

(5) Section 305(h) (50 U.S.C. App. 535(h)) is amended to read as follows:

“(h) MISDEMEANOR.—Any person who knowingly seizes, holds, or detains the personal effects, security deposit, or other property of a servicemember or a servicemember's dependent who lawfully terminates a lease covered by this section, or who knowingly interferes with the removal of such property from premises covered by such lease, for the purpose of subjecting or attempting to subject any of such property to a claim for rent accruing subsequent to the date of termination of such lease, or attempts to do so, shall be fined as provided in title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.”.

(6) Section 306(e) (50 U.S.C. App. 536(e)) is amended to read as follows:

“(e) MISDEMEANOR.—A person who knowingly takes an action contrary to this section, or attempts to do so, shall be fined as provided in title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.”.

(7) Section 307(c) (50 U.S.C. App. 537(c)) is amended to read as follows:

“(c) MISDEMEANOR.—A person who knowingly takes an action contrary to this section, or attempts to do so, shall be fined as provided in title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.”.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act is amended by adding at the end the following new items:

“TITLE VIII—CIVIL LIABILITY

“Sec. 801. Enforcement by the Attorney General.

“Sec. 802. Private right of action.

“Sec. 803. Preservation of remedies.”.

TITLE III—OTHER BENEFITS MATTERS

SEC. 301. IMPROVEMENT OF OUTREACH ACTIVITIES WITHIN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 5 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“SUBCHAPTER IV—OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

“§ 561. Outreach activities: coordination of activities within the Department

“(a) COORDINATION PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall establish and maintain procedures for ensuring the effective coordination of the outreach activities of the Department between and among the following:

- “(1) The Office of the Secretary.
- “(2) The Office of Public Affairs.
- “(3) The Veterans Health Administration.
- “(4) The Veterans Benefits Administration.
- “(5) The National Cemetery Administration.

“(b) ANNUAL REVIEW OF PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall—

“(1) annually review the procedures in effect under subsection (a) for the purpose of ensuring that those procedures meet the requirements of that subsection; and

“(2) make such modifications to those procedures as the Secretary considers appropriate in light of such review in order to better achieve that purpose.

“§ 562. Outreach activities: cooperative activities with States; grants to States for improvement of outreach

“(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to provide for assistance by the Secretary to State and county veterans agencies to carry out programs in locations within the respective jurisdictions of such agencies that offer a high probability of improving outreach and assistance to veterans, and to the spouses, children, and parents of veterans, to ensure that such individuals are fully informed about, and assisted in applying for, any veterans' and veterans-related benefits and programs (including State veterans' programs) for which they may be eligible.

“(b) PRIORITY FOR AREAS WITH HIGH CONCENTRATION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—In providing assistance under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to State and county veteran agencies in locations—

“(1) that have relatively large concentrations of populations of veterans and other individuals referred to in subsection (a); or

“(2) that are experiencing growth in the population of veterans and other individuals referred to in subsection (a).

“(c) CONTRACTS FOR OUTREACH SERVICES.—

The Secretary may enter into a contract with a State or county veterans agency in order to carry out, coordinate, improve, or otherwise enhance outreach by the Department and the State or county (including outreach with respect to a State or county veterans program). As a condition of entering into any such contract, the Secretary shall require the agency to submit annually to the Secretary a three-year plan for the use of any funds provided to the agency pursuant to the contract and to meet the annual outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (d)(4).

“(d) GRANTS.—(1) The Secretary may make a grant to a State or county veterans agency to be used to carry out, coordinate, improve, or otherwise enhance—

“(A) outreach activities, including activities carried out pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (c); and

“(B) activities to assist in the development and submittal of claims for veterans and vet-

erans-related benefits, including activities carried out pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (c).

“(2) A State veterans agency that receives a grant under this subsection may award all or a portion of the grant to county veterans agencies within the State to provide outreach services for veterans, on the basis of the number of veterans residing in the jurisdiction of each county.

“(3) To be eligible for a grant under this subsection, a State or county veterans agency shall submit to the Secretary an application containing such information and assurances as the Secretary may require. The Secretary shall require a State or county veterans agency to include, as part of the agency's application—

“(A) a three-year plan for the use of the grant; and

“(B) a description of the programs through which the agency will meet the annual outcome measures developed by the Secretary under paragraph (4).

“(4)(A) The Secretary shall develop and provide to the recipient of a grant under this subsection written guidance on annual outcome measures, Department policies, and procedures for applying for grants under this section.

“(B) The Secretary shall annually review the performance of each State or county veterans agency that receives a grant under this section.

“(C) In the case of a State or county veterans agency that is a recipient of a grant under this subsection that does not meet the annual outcome measures developed by the Secretary, the Secretary shall require the agency to submit a remediation plan under which the agency shall describe how and when it plans to meet such outcome measures. The Secretary must approve such plan before the Secretary may make a subsequent grant to that agency under this subsection.

“(5) No portion of any grant awarded under this subsection may be used for the purposes of administering the grant funds or to subsidize the salaries of State or county veterans service officers or other employees of a State or county veterans agency that receives a grant under this subsection.

“(6) Federal funds provided to a State or county veterans agency under this subsection may not be used to provide more than 50 percent of the total cost of the State or county government activities described in paragraph (1) and shall be used to expand existing outreach programs and services and not to supplant State and local funding that is otherwise available.

“(7) In awarding grants under this subsection, the Secretary shall give priority to State and county veterans agencies that serve the largest populations of veterans.

“(8)(A) In a case in which a county government does not have a county veterans agency, the county government may be awarded a grant under this subsection to establish such an agency.

“(B) In a case in which a county government does not have a county veterans agency and does not seek to establish such an agency through the use of a grant under this subsection, the State veterans agency for the State in which the county is located may use a grant under this section to provide outreach services for that county.

“(C) In the case of a State in which no State or county veterans agency seeks to receive a grant under this subsection, the funds that would otherwise be allocated for that State shall be reallocated to those States in which county veterans agencies exist and have sought grants under this subsection.

“(9) A grant under this subsection may be used to provide education and training, including on-the-job training, for State, county, and local government employees who provide (or when trained will provide) veterans outreach services in order for those employees to obtain accreditation in accordance with procedures approved by the Secretary and, for employees so accredited, for purposes of continuing education.

“(e) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this section:

“(1) The term ‘State veterans agency’ means the element of the government of a State that has responsibility for programs and activities of that State government relating to veterans benefits.

“(2) The term ‘county veterans agency’ means the element of the government of a county or municipality that has responsibility for programs and activities of that county or municipal government relating to veterans benefits.

“§ 563. Outreach activities: funding

“(a) SEPARATE ACCOUNT.—Amounts for the outreach activities of the Department under this subchapter shall be budgeted and appropriated through a separate appropriation account.

“(b) SEPARATE STATEMENT OF AMOUNT.—In the budget justification materials submitted to Congress in support of the Department budget for any fiscal year (as submitted with the budget of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31), the Secretary shall include a separate statement of the amount requested to be appropriated for that fiscal year for the account specified in subsection (a).

“§ 564. Definition of outreach

“For purposes of this subchapter, the term ‘outreach’ means the act or process of taking steps in a systematic manner to provide information, services, and benefits counseling to veterans, and the survivors of veterans, who may be eligible to receive benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary to ensure that those individuals are fully informed about, and assisted in applying for, any benefits and programs under such laws for which they may be eligible.

“§ 565. Authorization of appropriations

“There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for each of fiscal years 2011, 2012, and 2013, \$25,000,000 to carry out this subchapter, including making grants under section 562(d) of this title.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new items:

“SUBCHAPTER IV—OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

“561. Outreach activities: coordination of activities within the Department.

“562. Outreach activities: cooperative activities with States; grants to States for improvement of outreach.

“563. Outreach activities: funding.

“564. Definition of outreach.

“565. Authorization of appropriations.”

(c) DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement the outreach activities required under subchapter IV of chapter 5 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), by not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 302. VISUAL IMPAIRMENT AND ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY PROFESSIONALS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—Part V is amended by adding at the end the following new chapter:

“CHAPTER 80—VISUAL IMPAIRMENT AND ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY PROFESSIONALS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

“Sec.

“8001. Establishment of scholarship program; purpose.

“8002. Application and acceptance.

“8003. Amount of assistance; duration.

“8004. Agreement.

“8005. Repayment for failure to satisfy requirements of agreement.

“§ 8001. Establishment of scholarship program; purpose

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary shall establish and carry out a scholarship program to provide financial assistance in accordance with this chapter to an individual—

“(1) who is accepted for enrollment or currently enrolled in a program of study leading to a degree or certificate in visual impairment or orientation and mobility, or a dual degree or certification in both such areas, at an accredited (as determined by the Secretary) educational institution that is in a State; and

“(2) who enters into an agreement with the Secretary as described in section 8004 of this chapter.

“(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the scholarship program established under this chapter is to increase the supply of qualified blind rehabilitation specialists for the Department and the Nation.

“(c) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall publicize the scholarship program established under this chapter to educational institutions throughout the United States, with an emphasis on disseminating information to such institutions with high numbers of Hispanic students and to Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

“§ 8002. Application and acceptance

“(a) APPLICATION.—(1) To apply and participate in the scholarship program under this chapter, an individual shall submit to the Secretary an application for such participation together with an agreement described in section 8004 of this chapter under which the participant agrees to serve a period of obligated service in the Department as provided in the agreement in return for payment of educational assistance as provided in the agreement.

“(2) In distributing application forms and agreement forms to individuals desiring to participate in the scholarship program, the Secretary shall include with such forms the following:

“(A) A fair summary of the rights and liabilities of an individual whose application is approved (and whose agreement is accepted) by the Secretary.

“(B) A full description of the terms and conditions that apply to participation in the scholarship program and service in the Department.

“(b) APPROVAL.—(1) Upon the Secretary's approval of an individual's participation in the scholarship program, the Secretary shall, in writing, promptly notify the individual of that acceptance.

“(2) An individual becomes a participant in the scholarship program upon such approval by the Secretary.

“§ 8003. Amount of assistance; duration

“(a) AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE.—The amount of the financial assistance provided for an individual under this chapter shall be the amount determined by the Secretary as being necessary to pay the tuition and fees of the individual. In the case of an individual enrolled in a program of study leading to a dual degree or certification in both the areas of study described in section 8001(a)(1) of this

chapter, the tuition and fees shall not exceed the amounts necessary for the minimum number of credit hours to achieve such dual certification or degree.

“(b) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ASSISTANCE.—Financial assistance may be provided to an individual under this chapter to supplement other educational assistance to the extent that the total amount of educational assistance received by the individual during an academic year does not exceed the total tuition and fees for such academic year.

“(c) MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE.—(1) In no case may the total amount of assistance provided under this chapter for an academic year to an individual who is a full-time student exceed \$15,000.

“(2) In the case of an individual who is a part-time student, the total amount of assistance provided under this chapter shall bear the same ratio to the amount that would be paid under paragraph (1) if the participant were a full-time student in the program of study being pursued by the individual as the coursework carried by the individual to full-time coursework in that program of study.

“(3) In no case may the total amount of assistance provided to an individual under this chapter exceed \$45,000.

“(d) MAXIMUM DURATION OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide financial assistance to an individual under this chapter for not more than six years.

“§ 8004. Agreement

“An agreement between the Secretary and a participant in the scholarship program under this chapter shall be in writing, shall be signed by the participant, and shall include—

“(1) the Secretary's agreement to provide the participant with financial assistance as authorized under this chapter;

“(2) the participant's agreement—

“(A) to accept such financial assistance;

“(B) to maintain enrollment and attendance in the program of study described in section 8001(a)(1) of this chapter;

“(C) while enrolled in such program, to maintain an acceptable level of academic standing (as determined by the educational institution offering such program under regulations prescribed by the Secretary); and

“(D) after completion of the program, to serve as a full-time employee in the Department for a period of three years, to be served within the first six years after the participant has completed such program and received a degree or certificate described in section 8001(a)(1) of this chapter; and

“(3) any other terms and conditions that the Secretary determines appropriate for carrying out this chapter.

“§ 8005. Repayment for failure to satisfy requirements of agreement

“(a) IN GENERAL.—An individual who receives educational assistance under this chapter shall repay to the Secretary an amount equal to the unearned portion of such assistance if the individual fails to satisfy the requirements of the agreement entered into under section 8004 of this chapter, except in circumstances authorized by the Secretary.

“(b) AMOUNT OF REPAYMENT.—The Secretary shall establish, by regulations, procedures for determining the amount of the repayment required under this subsection and the circumstances under which an exception to the required repayment may be granted.

“(c) WAIVER OR SUSPENSION OF COMPLIANCE.—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations providing for the waiver or suspension of any obligation of an individual for service

or payment under this chapter (or an agreement under this chapter) whenever non-compliance by the individual is due to circumstances beyond the control of the individual or whenever the Secretary determines that the waiver or suspension of compliance is in the best interest of the United States.

“(d) OBLIGATION AS DEBT TO UNITED STATES.—An obligation to repay the Secretary under this section is, for all purposes, a debt owed the United States. A discharge in bankruptcy under title 11 does not discharge a person from such debt if the discharge order is entered less than five years after the date of the termination of the agreement or contract on which the debt is based.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The tables of chapters at the beginning of title 38, United States Code, and of part V of such title, are each amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 79 the following new item:

“80. Visual Impairment and Orientation and Mobility Professionals Education Assistance Program ... 8001”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement chapter 80 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 303. INTERMENT IN NATIONAL CEMETERIES OF PARENTS OF CERTAIN DECEASED VETERANS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Corey Shea Act”.

(b) INTERMENT OF PARENTS OF CERTAIN DECEASED VETERANS.—Section 2402 is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “Under such regulations” and inserting “(a) Under such regulations”;

(2) by moving the margins of paragraphs (1) through (8) two ems to the right;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (8) the following new paragraph:

“(9)(A) The parent of a person described in subparagraph (B), if the Secretary determines that there is available space at the gravesite where the person described in subparagraph (B) is interred.

“(B) A person described in this subparagraph is a person described in paragraph (1) who—

“(i) is a hostile casualty or died from a training-related injury;

“(ii) is interred in a national cemetery; and

“(iii) at the time of the person’s parent’s death, did not have a spouse, surviving spouse, or child who is buried or who, upon death, may be eligible for burial in a national cemetery pursuant to paragraph (5).”;

and

(4) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b) For purposes of subsection (a)(9) of this section:

“(1) The term ‘parent’ means a biological father or a biological mother or, in the case of adoption, a father through adoption or a mother through adoption.

“(2) The term ‘hostile casualty’ means a person who, as a member of the Armed Forces, dies as the direct result of hostile action with the enemy, while in combat, while going to or returning from a combat mission if the cause of death was directly related to hostile action, or while hospitalized or undergoing treatment at the expense of the United States for injury incurred during combat, and includes a person killed mistakenly or accidentally by friendly fire directed at a hostile force or what is thought to be a hostile force, but does not include a person who dies due to the elements, a self-inflicted wound, combat fatigue, or a friendly force while the person was in an absent-without-

leave, deserter, or dropped-from-rolls status or was voluntarily absent from a place of duty.

“(3) The term ‘training-related injury’ means an injury incurred by a member of the Armed Forces while performing authorized training activities in preparation for a combat mission.”.

(c) GUIDANCE REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall develop guidance under which the parent of a person described in paragraph (9)(B) of subsection (a) of section 2402 of title 38, United States Code, may be designated for interment in a national cemetery under that section.

(d) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) CROSS-REFERENCE CORRECTION.—Section 107 is amended by striking “section 2402(8)” both places it appears and inserting “section 2402(a)(8)”.

(2) CROSS-REFERENCE CORRECTION.—Section 2301(e) is amended by striking “section 2402(6)” and inserting “section 2402(a)(6)”.

(3) CROSS-REFERENCE CORRECTION.—Section 2306(a) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “section 2402(4)” and inserting “section 2402(a)(4)”; and

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking “section 2402(5)” and inserting “section 2402(a)(5)”.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to the death, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, of the parent of a person described in section 2402(a)(9)(B) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), who dies on or after October 7, 2001.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

H.R. 3949, as amended, the Veterans’ Small Business Assistance and Servicemembers Protection Act of 2009, is a necessary cornerstone to grant deserving heroes the protections and opportunities to succeed. This legislation includes several important provisions and would not be possible without the hard work of many members of this committee and of Congress as a whole.

H.R. 3949 addresses the needs of veteran-owned small businesses. A provision of the bill will require that all businesses listed in the Department of Veterans Affairs VetBiz Vendor Information Pages database have been confirmed as veteran-owned small businesses so our veterans are furnished the economic benefits that Congress intended them to receive through their military service and sacrifice. I would again like to thank Congresswoman HERSETH SANDLIN, chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, for her continued leadership on this issue.

H.R. 3949 also includes a timely bill, first introduced by one of our active committee members, Representative ANN KIRKPATRICK of Arizona. This provision seeks to reauthorize the Veterans’ Advisory Committee on Education whose authorization is set to expire at the end of this year. Reauthorizing the advisory committee will pro-

vide the VA Secretary with a group of subject matter experts to help work to ensure our heroes have the educational opportunities they’ve earned.

Furthermore, this comprehensive bill includes important updates to the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. H.R. 3949 will strengthen our efforts nationally to support veterans, servicemembers and their families during deployment. The bill will allow greater flexibility for family cell phone plans, rental leases, and motor vehicle leases when servicemembers are deployed or required to change duty stations. The bill authorizes the U.S. Attorney General to bring a civil action in U.S. district courts to enforce provisions of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

The provisions on the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act included in H.R. 3949 are a collaborative effort that includes bills introduced by Representatives BRAD MILLER of North Carolina, Representative GERALD CONNOLLY of Virginia and Representative PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, respectively. Their efforts to protect our deployed servicemembers are commendable.

Another important provision included in this legislation seeks to assist in VA’s outreach efforts to improve coordination among the key offices within the Department of Veterans Affairs. This provision was originally introduced by my colleague, Representative MIKE MCINTYRE of North Carolina.

To help the 160,000 legally blind veterans in the United States, a provision of this bill would establish a scholarship program for students seeking a degree or a certificate in the area of visual impairment, orientation and mobility. This would help our blind veterans by increasing the number of vision rehabilitation specialists with the appropriate education and training. I would like to thank Representative SHEILA JACKSON-LEE of Texas for her continued leadership on this issue and her dedication to the needs of our veterans.

Finally, the legislation honors our fallen American heroes by providing an eligible parent of a deceased veteran to be buried in a VA national cemetery when the deceased veteran does not have an immediate spouse or child. I want to thank Representative BARNEY FRANK of Massachusetts for introducing this incredibly important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this bipartisan legislation will provide needed changes for our veterans and their families while addressing the unique needs of veterans and servicemembers as they serve the country. I would like to thank the committee’s ranking member, Representative STEVE BUYER of Indiana, members of the committee and my colleagues for working in a bipartisan manner on H.R. 3949. Again, I would like to thank my colleagues who got this final bill here and for helping our veterans.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It appears this legislation has a lot of wonderful components in it. It represents about seven individual bills. It would amend title 38 of the United States Code and the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to make certain improvements in the laws relating to benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

The bill, H.R. 3949, is designed to continue the Veterans' Advisory Committee on Education, improve protections under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, improve VA outreach programs, establish a VA scholarship program, and expand eligibility for burial in a national cemetery.

Public Law 109-461 requires VA to maintain a database of veteran- and disabled veteran-owned small businesses and to validate the ownership and control any business included in the database. Implementing those provisions, VA has allowed any business that applies for inclusion in the database to be listed prior to being validated. The bill would require VA to list only those businesses that have been validated. This will prevent non-veteran-owned businesses from misrepresenting themselves as veteran-owned.

Mr. Speaker, I did want to bring to my colleagues' attention the disappointment on this side of the aisle that the amended bill we are considering drops section 102 from H.R. 3949, which was unanimously reported by the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Section 102 would clarify that Congress intends to allow VA contracting officers at the Department of Veterans Affairs to award sole source contracts to service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses on the same basis as so-called 8(a) businesses under the Small Business Act. VA contracting officers often interpret the Small Business Act as giving 8(a) firms a higher priority than service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, which we do not believe is consistent with congressional intent. All this provision would do is to give veterans a level playing field with 8(a), women- and minority-owned small businesses. So obviously we're disappointed. We're not clear why this happened, but we wanted to bring that to the attention of my colleagues.

Furthermore, service-connected disabled veteran small business owners have earned and deserve an equal level of priority for VA contracts. Unfortunately, the Small Business Committee majority and the Oversight and Government Reform Committee majority have asserted jurisdiction and are holding up this important provision to help service-disabled veteran-owned small business, and this is just a week before Veterans Day, I might add.

Service-disabled veteran-owned small business owners are men and women of all races and economic groups from all over the country. In these difficult eco-

nomic times, they need the help section 102 would have provided. While I regret that this important provision isn't in the bill today, we hope to work with the Small Business Committee and the Oversight and Government Reform Committee to ultimately reach an agreement on a way to allow service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses just simply a fair opportunity to obtain sole source contracts from the Veterans Administration. Servicemembers continue to experience service contract and lease difficulties that are related to permanent change of duty stations and deployments. H.R. 3949 would clarify the member's rights and obligations under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, or SCRA, when terminating a service contract or lease due to military orders.

The bill also contains provisions that would authorize the United States Attorney General to initiate action in a U.S. district court on behalf of a veteran whose rights under SCRA may have been violated and allows courts to provide relief to the member, including monetary damages, and assess civil penalties up to \$110,000. Unfortunately, courts sometimes fail to recognize the individual right of action that is implicit in the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. As one hearing witness noted, it makes no sense to provide a right and then deny the individual the ability to enforce that right. Therefore, the legislation would also codify a private right of action to make it clear to all courts that an individual has a right to bring legal action to protect rights granted under SCRA.

Title 3 of the bill includes an authorization to allow VA to provide up to \$25 million in grants to State veterans agencies and to allow these agencies to provide all or a portion of these grants to county veterans service agencies to increase outreach to veterans.

□ 1500

Such grants carry with them significant responsibility for the VA and State and local veterans agencies to ensure simply these funds are properly accounted for and to measure the results of this provision.

One of the least discussed injuries due to the traumatic effects of improvised explosive devices is the damage to the body's visual system. Unfortunately, these effects may be subtle at first or not occur immediately after the event. To accommodate the increasing number of visually impaired veterans whose sight has been affected either directly by combat or the effects of aging and disease, title III also would authorize the VA to grant scholarships to persons in educational programs relating to treating visual impairment and mobility issues.

Now persons receiving such scholarships would be required to commit to working within the VA health care system for a requisite number of years. The bill also stipulates conditions for repayment of the scholarships in the

event that the individual fails to fulfill the conditions that are specified in this scholarship.

Finally, my colleagues, the bill would define the conditions under which the parents of a deceased veteran could be buried with the veteran in a national cemetery.

I support this bill. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, before I yield time to my chairwoman, I would like to say I concur with the gentleman from Florida's assessment on section 102. And when we looked at this, one of the things we discussed was this was procedural because of the jurisdictional issues. And I would sure be willing to work with the gentleman to make sure we do bring that back up again. I think the issue here was all of the good in this bill would have been held back and we wouldn't have been able to move any of it forward as we worked out the jurisdictional issues.

So I do concur with your assessment that it is an important piece. We did vote on it unanimously, and I think down the road here we need to get it in.

Mr. STEARNS. If the gentleman will yield, I thank my colleague for his support, and I look forward to working with him.

Mr. WALZ. At this time I yield 5 minutes to the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN.

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3949, the Veterans' Small Business Assistance and Servicemembers Protection Act of 2009, which the full Veterans' Affairs Committee approved with bipartisan support last week and which contains legislation I introduced, along with the ranking member of the Economic Opportunities Subcommittee, Mr. BOOZMAN, to verify the veteran status of small businesses listed in the VetBiz Vendor Information Pages, known as the VIP database.

I would like to thank full committee Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for their leadership and support for this legislation.

The overall bill under consideration by the House combines the provisions from a number of other bills into strong legislation that will assist a broad array of veterans in a variety of ways, and I applaud Chairman FILNER for moving this legislation forward.

The bill updates the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act and burial regulations for national cemeteries. It creates a scholarship program to improve the eye care available to veterans and improves the Department of Veterans Affairs' outreach efforts by improving coordination among key offices within the VA.

The Veterans Small Business Verification Act that Mr. BOOZMAN and I introduced follows up on legislation Congress passed in 2006 requiring the VA to

maintain its VIP database and verify that applicants for inclusion in the database were veteran-owned small businesses or service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses. Once firms register in the VIP database, they qualify to receive set-aside or sole-source awards.

The Economic Opportunity Subcommittee learned through hearings and meetings with VA staff and the veterans community that the database contained firms that didn't qualify because the verification process was voluntary. This voluntary process meant that while the VIP database included over 16,000 businesses, less than 1,000 had received verification of their veteran status or had voluntarily submitted information to be verified.

While I'm pleased that Veterans Affairs Secretary Shinseki has taken steps since these hearings over the past 6 months to improve the process by which businesses are verified, this bill will ensure our veterans are afforded the small business opportunities they're due.

The Veterans Small Business Verification Act would amend title XXXVIII to clarify current law and require the VA to verify that firms are veteran-owned small businesses or service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses in order to be listed in the VIP database. Furthermore, it requires that the VA notify small businesses already listed in the database of the need to verify their status.

In conclusion, H.R. 3949 takes important steps toward providing needed assistance in a number of areas to those veterans who have bravely served their country. I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 3949.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN).

Mr. BOOZMAN. I thank Mr. STEARNS for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I too rise in support of H.R. 3949, several provisions of which originated in the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity. I want to especially thank Chairwoman HERSETH SANDLIN for her leadership in moving these provisions, as well as Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for bringing the bill to the floor.

I did have one major disappointment, and Mr. STEARNS alluded to it earlier, in the effort to get the "may" to "shall" provisions, business provisions, that merely would have put disabled veteran-owned small businesses on an equal footing with 8(a) firms when competing for sole-source contracts at the Department of Veterans Affairs. I guess that was removed at the request of the Small Business Committee. And I know Mr. WALZ is concerned and the rest of the committee are all concerned about that.

Hopefully, we can all work together to reach a solution to that problem. This is something that literally we have all been working on for years, the

"mays" to "shall" and things. So, again, like I said, hopefully we can resolve that problem.

This is a very, very good bill. I think it's something that all of the committee can be very, very proud of. This is the kind of work that we want coming out of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and so I very much support it. Again, special thanks to Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, Chairman FILNER, and Ranking Member BUYER.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), who had an important piece of this bill incorporated in.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, this is a sad day for me because it is close to the anniversary of the death in Iraq of a very brave young man, Corey Shea, whose picture is here.

He was killed in Iraq just the day after Veterans Day of last year, and I went to the funeral, along with my colleague Senator KERRY, to the town of Mansfield, Massachusetts. Like I think most Members, I try very hard to attend the funeral of every young man and woman who is killed in the service of the country. It's the least we can do. It's not a great deal, but it's the least we can do to show a small piece of the gratitude we feel to those people and our obligation to their families.

Also, it seems to me, anybody in our position who has to vote on going to war needs to fully understand the consequences of those votes, and going to the funerals of the young people killed in those wars ought to be mandatory for any of us who vote. That doesn't mean you don't vote for the war. I voted for the war in Afghanistan. I've been to funerals of people killed there. But it is an important thing to hammer home.

In this case at the funeral I met an extraordinary woman, Denise Anderson, the mother of Corey Shea, who was, in her grief at the loss of her wonderful young son, further concerned because he would be buried alone.

His country took him when he was too young to have married or raised a family. So under the rules of eligibility for burial at a veterans cemetery, he was to be buried alone. His mother said as bad as it was for her to lose her son, the thought that he would be alone forever added greatly to her pain. So she had asked if she could be buried with him, and she was turned down.

Now, under the rules a member of the military eligible to be buried in a national cemetery who has a spouse with children can have up to three parts used. So we're not taking anything away from someone. In Corey Shea's case, this wonderful young man who lost his life has three parts available, and his mother simply asked to be allowed to use one of them. She was turned down.

At that point Senator KERRY and I decided to see what we could do. So we filed legislation to alleviate that, and I am enormously grateful to all members from both parties in the Committee on Veterans' Affairs for the speed with which they acted and the grace they showed to this brave, grieving mother. And I am very pleased that the bill which we would dare concur in, called the Corey Shea Act, is going to be included in this package.

Mr. Speaker, rather than go further myself, I'm going to read the testimony that Denise Anderson, the mother of Corey Shea, presented to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. We obviously exhausted our remedies, I should say. She applied. Only after it was clear that only legislation would work did we file a bill.

And, of course, I should point out, as a tribute to Denise Anderson, this isn't a bill just for her and her son who lost his life. It's a bill for any parent of any young member of the military who will know at least that that's available to him or to her.

So nearly a year after her son was killed in Iraq, she had the opportunity to address the committee, and here's what she said:

"I stand before you humbly asking you to pass or amend this bill number H.R. 761. This would allow me to be interred with my son, who was killed in action in Mosul, Iraq on November 12, 2008. He sacrificed his life for his country, and I sacrifice every day being without him.

"My son, Corey, had a heart as big as the world. He would be the first one to volunteer or help someone in need. But he would always hesitate to ask for help. He was a lot like me in that way, but today I show my passion for this bill by standing in front of you asking for your help. If you knew my son, you would understand what kind of person he was. He was a very respectful young man who would do anything for anybody. He was my heart and soul, and I cannot express the bond between us. If you have children, you might understand, but losing a child is against nature and he should be burying me.

"I was a single parent until Corey was about 8 years old. His biological father was not around. In fact, he was in prison. He never paid child support, and I worked over 60 hours a week just to support him and make sure he had everything he needed. Jeff took over the job of stepfather and Corey gladly accepted him. When he came home on leave, we would stay up until the sun came up. I did not want to miss a minute with him.

"My son was killed by an Iraqi soldier. These soldiers are supposed to be working with our troops over in Iraq. He was an Iraqi soldier for 4 years before turning on our soldiers. On that terrible day, he killed two soldiers, including my son, and wounded six other American soldiers.

"I was not home when the Army came to my door, but my 18-year-old

daughter was there. She is a very intelligent person and knew why they were there. She called me, not telling me what was going on, which was probably a good thing. But when I arrived home, the Mansfield police and the Army vehicle were parked in front of my home. My son had only a month left on his first tour, and he would have been home. After passing out, the police called the paramedics, who took me to the hospital.

"The whole town came together for Corey. They were so involved with his funeral, and it was very heartfelt. My son was the only and hopefully the only soldier who passed away during this war in Mansfield. He is a Mansfield hero. I belong to the VFW in Mansfield, Massachusetts, and I have spoken to many veterans that are members there, and they don't have a problem with me being interred with my son. In fact, everyone I spoke with doesn't haven't a problem.

"This amendment would not be taking up any other deserving space for other veterans. My son has three extra plots, but he was not married nor did he have any dependents. He did not have time, since, like I said, he was a child himself.

"I could speak all day regarding my son and what a wonderful and respectful young man he was. But I am here to ask you to amend the bill number H.R. 761. If you decide to pass this, it would give me some peace in my life to which I can pay more attention to my husband and daughter, whom I feel I have been neglecting. I could finally be able to move forward in my life just knowing I can spend eternity with my son.

"Please listen with your hearts and amend this bill. I appreciate your time listening to me today. This may be a minimal issue with you, but it means everything to me.

"Thank you for your attention in this matter.

"Denise Anderson, proud mother of Specialist Corey Shea, my warrior hero and wonderful son."

I would only say the one difference I would have with Mrs. Anderson is no one here takes this as a minimal issue. We are grateful to her for giving us one more chance to show in a small way how much we honor those who have lost their lives.

I will just repeat one thing I said, Mr. Speaker, in the testimony. I cannot think of a greater disproportion than what Denise Anderson gave to us, her son, and what she has asked us to give in return. I am pleased that at least the House will be doing that today.

□ 1515

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to my colleague from North Carolina, Mr. MILLER.

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of this bill. A portion of this bill began its legislative life as separate legislation introduced by WALTER JONES, my col-

league from North Carolina, and by me to improve the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, the SCRA. This legislation now provides real teeth and real remedy for the protections of the SCRA.

Someone who is serving in our military, who is defending our country, who is on active service, on active duty, should not have to worry about what is happening in court back home. They shouldn't have to worry if someone is getting a judgment against them or their home is being foreclosed on. Anyone who has a claim against someone who is in our military should not lose their claim, but their claim can wait, the lawsuit can wait, until the servicemember can come home, come to court and defend themselves, assert whatever right they may have, and tell their side of the story.

The law is now not entirely clear about whether a servicemember who has had that right violated, that right to get a little break while they are on military service, whether they can do something about it, and the legislation now makes very clear that they can. They can bring their own lawsuit. The Attorney General can bring a lawsuit, and the servicemember can join in that, and the servicemember can bring a lawsuit of their own.

A right that does not allow a remedy, a right that cannot be enforced is no right at all. This legislation now makes very clear that the rights under SCRA are real rights, and our servicemembers can devote their whole energy to defense of our country and not worry about what is going on in a courthouse back home.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of our time to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCINTYRE).

(Mr. MCINTYRE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Veterans' Small Business Assistance and Servicemembers Protection Act of 2009, H.R. 3949, which includes provisions of a bill that I introduced on the very first day that this Congress was sworn in this year, the 111th Congress, which was H.R. 32, the Veterans Outreach Improvement Act of 2009. I want to thank Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for their support, as well as the many cosponsors from both sides of the aisle who have joined us in this effort to honor those who have put their lives on the line for our country, whom we will soon be honoring as a Nation on Veterans Day.

This important legislation, which passed the U.S. House unanimously during the last session of Congress, the 110th Congress, by a vote of 421-0, would improve the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs outreach activities by allowing the Department to partner with State and local governments to reach out to veterans and their families regarding benefits for which they are eligible and to assist them in developing a benefits claim package.

About a quarter of our Nation's population of veterans are potentially eligible for VA benefits and services. A quarter of our total Nation's population are potentially eligible for veterans benefits and services. This legislation will help reach out to those who are eligible and ensure the accuracy and completeness of their benefit claims. And under this legislation, the Secretary of the VA would be authorized to provide grants and assistance to State veterans agencies and to our county veterans service officers, those who are on the front lines every day working in counties throughout this entire Nation, to help that veteran when he or she walks through the door.

These activities would allow veterans and their families to be able to get the assistance they need in the development and the submittal of their benefits claims. The Secretary would direct grants to States with large and growing populations of veterans in order to increase the outreach where it is most needed. Grants could be used for education and training of State and county officials to gain accreditation for continuing education. The Secretary would also be required to ensure that the coordination of outreach activities occurred within the Department of the VA.

This bill would authorize \$25 million annually, which is an average of \$1 per veteran, for fiscal years 2011 through 2013 to improve outreach to veterans. That, I believe, is not too much to ask. That is something we can certainly afford to do, and it is the least we can do to reach out to those who put their very lives on the line for our great Nation.

This legislation is supported by the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers, which is officially recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for "the purpose of preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims."

This bill has also been endorsed by the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Military Officers Association of America, the Paralyzed Veterans Association of America, and the National Organization for Veterans Advocacy.

As Veterans Day approaches in just a few days, it is important that we, as a Congress, demonstrate to our Nation's veterans our commitment to provide them with the benefits they deserve.

May God bless those who have served our country.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the actions of the House of Representatives in addressing the unique needs of our veterans and armed service members. Whether returning home from a tour of duty, or deploying for the first time, it is our responsibility to ensure these men and women are cared for when they return home. Through extensive educational outreach, additional grants, scholarships, and extending protections to today's veterans, we can provide these men and women with the tools they need to foster economic growth. As a member

of the House Armed Services Committee, I strongly support H.R. 3949, which further protects our nation's veterans. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

Mr. Speaker, our nation's economy was once empowered by our returning war heroes whose successful small businesses fueled the country's eventual rise as an economic superpower. We are now witnessing the emergence of another great generation. It would be careless of us not to grant this generation the same opportunities to succeed. This can only be done through further investment in small business development.

This bill would expand contract termination provisions for deployed servicemembers, prevent additional fees for early termination, expand assistance and outreach to states to inform veterans about benefits and programs for which they are eligible.

I urge my colleagues to help veterans help themselves.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3949, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF BERLIN AIRLIFT'S SUCCESS

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 398) recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift's success.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 398

Whereas pursuant to mutual agreement among allies concluded at the Potsdam Conference following the unconditional surrender of Adolf Hitler's National Socialist (NAZI) regime on May 8, 1945, the German capital of Berlin was divided into four zones of military occupation controlled by the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and France;

Whereas in a bid to maintain leverage over Germany by perpetuating its economic instability, and in opposition to the United States' Marshall Plan and the allies' proposal for a new, more stable German currency, then Soviet Dictator Joseph Stalin ordered a blockade of Berlin on June 22, 1948;

Whereas Stalin's blockade prohibited all ground access to the city, blocking the people of Berlin;

Whereas three 20-mile-wide free air corridors had been agreed on November 30, 1945, to provide unfettered access to Berlin along accepted flight routes;

Whereas the Soviet regime insisted that the Western Allies allow food and medicine to be supplied to these sectors only through

Soviet-controlled East Germany, effectively allowing Soviet control over West Berlin;

Whereas President Harry S. Truman ordered the stationing of U.S. B-29 Superfortresses at British airfields on June 28, 1948;

Whereas Britain's Foreign Minister Ernest Brevin, at the suggestion of Commander Sir Brian Robertson, proposed employing a military airlift as an alternative to an armed convoy through the Soviet sector to provide humanitarian relief to Berlin's traumatized and beleaguered population;

Whereas General Lucius Clay, then United States military governor of Germany, and Major General Curtis LeMay, Commanding General of the United States Air Force in Europe, requested Douglas C-54 Skymasters, the largest transport plane available to the United States Air Force, to help supply the colossal strategic air mission;

Whereas the first Skymasters arrived at Rhein-Main Air Base on June 28, 1948, and were immediately loaded to begin Operation Vittles to convey supplies to Berlin;

Whereas the Soviet regime publically derided the airlift, announcing that it would be impossible to carry out and maintain such an operation, characterizing the mission in the East German press as, "the futile attempts of the Americans to save face and to maintain their untenable position in Berlin";

Whereas Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand joined Great Britain and the United States in what became the largest humanitarian operation ever undertaken by the United States Air Force;

Whereas Lt. General William Turner, honored in the Air Cargo Hall of Fame for his tactical brilliance as commander of the Berlin Airlift, was called upon to lead the Berlin Airlift and worked tirelessly to ensure that the aircraft he commanded supplied the besieged city of Berlin with essential supplies including coal, heating oil, medicine, and food from July 28, 1948, through the official conclusion of the mission on September 30, 1949;

Whereas the Berlin Airlift resulted in the total delivery of 1,783,573 tons of supplies by the United States and 541,937 tons of supplies totaling 2,300,000 tons delivered on 277,569 total flights to Berlin;

Whereas the United States Air Force's C-47s and C-54s alone logged 92,000,000 miles in the Berlin Airlift;

Whereas the commitment of the United States to aid the besieged people of Berlin resulted in the tragic loss of 101 allied personnel, of which 31 were United States casualties;

Whereas the following Air Force units, aided by the United States Navy and Army, are known to have contributed to the success of the Berlin Airlift—

- (1) HHS1Air Life Task Force;
- (2) 10 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (3) 11 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (4) 12 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (5) 14 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (6) 15 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (7) 29 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (8) 39 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (9) 40 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (10) 41 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (11) 47 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (12) 48 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (13) 53 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (14) HHS 60 Troop Carrier Wing;
- (15) HQ 60 Troop Carrier Group;
- (16) 60 Troop Carrier Group;
- (17) HQ60 Maintenance Support Group;
- (18) 60 Maintenance Squadron;
- (19) 60 Supply Squadron;
- (20) 60 FIN DIS UT;
- (21) 60 COMM Squadron;
- (22) 60A police Squadron;
- (23) 60 Food Service Squadron;

- (24) 60 Install SQ;
- (25) 60 Motor Vehicle Squadron;
- (26) 60 Base Services Squadron;
- (27) 60 Medical Group;
- (28) HHS A B Group;
- (29) HQ61 Troop Carrier Group;
- (30) HQ313 Troop Carrier Group;
- (31) HHS61 Troop Carrier Wing;
- (32) HQ317 Troop Carrier Group;
- (33) HQ317 Maintenance Supply Group;
- (34) 317 Maintenance Squadron;
- (35) 317 Supply Squadron;
- (36) HHS 317 A B Group;
- (37) 317 Communications Squadron;
- (38) 317A Police Squadron;
- (39) 317 Food Services Squadron;
- (40) 317 Installation Squadron;
- (41) 317 Motor Vehicle Squadron;
- (42) 317 Base Services Squadron;
- (43) 317 FIN DIS UT;
- (44) 317 Medical Group;
- (45) 330 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (46) 331 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (47) 332 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (48) 333 Troop Carrier Squadron;
- (49) HHS 513 A B Group;
- (50) HQ 513 Troop Carrier Group;
- (51) 513 Troop Carrier Group;
- (52) HQ 513 Maintenance Sup Group;
- (53) 513 Maintenance Squadron;
- (54) 513 Supply Squadron;
- (55) 513 Communications Squadron;
- (56) 513A Police Squadron;
- (57) 513 Food Service Squadron;
- (58) 513 Install Squadron;
- (59) 513 Motor Vehicle Squadron;
- (60) 513 Base Services Squadron;
- (61) 513 Finance Distribution Unit;
- (62) 513 Medical Group;
- (63) HHS 7350 A B Group;
- (64) 7351 Maintenance Supply Squadron;
- (65) 7352 AF Police Squadron;
- (66) 7353 Installation Squadron; and
- (67) HHS 7497A Lift Wing;

Whereas Col. Gail Halvorsen, also known as the "Candy Bomber" and recipient of the 1948 Cheney Award, distinguished himself by launching Operation Little Vittles, a unanimous effort that parachuted over 3 tons of candy to the children of Berlin, including children in the Soviet sector;

Whereas in the face of the massive allied goodwill offensive, the Soviets capitulated and lifted the blockade on May 12, 1949;

Whereas the Berlin Airlift consolidated the successful use of air transport in military operations and led to the creation of the Air Mobility Command;

Whereas German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer noted that the Berlin Airlift "was a truly visible sign that America recognized her duty to be the leader of free nations and wanted to fulfill it."; and

Whereas the determined actions of the Berlin Airlift sent a clear message to the Soviet Union that the United States held an unquestionable commitment and unwavering resolve to prevent tyranny in Europe: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift, and commends all of the operation's United States veterans for their valor and determination to represent the noble ideals that thwarted the fall of the Iron Curtain over Berlin's western strongholds;

(2) honors the veterans of the Berlin Airlift who lost their lives to bring the means of survival and sustenance to civilians under siege in the service to their country;

(3) commends the spirit of collaboration which characterized this united allied operation involving both military and civilian aircraft and crews; and

(4) honors the men and women of the United States military whose continued dedication to the ideals of integrity, compassion, and liberty upholds the honorable legacy of the United States Armed Forces, as illustrated by the Berlin Airlift, and renews

our faith in the power of freedom and goodness to prevail over tyranny.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3949, as amended, and H. Res. 398.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Before I talk about the importance of the resolution before us today, I want to thank the Committee on Armed Services for working with the Veterans' Affairs Committee to bring this bill to the floor. And I include for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the exchange of letters waiving jurisdiction between the Committee of Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 6, 2009.

Hon. BOB FILNER,
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On May 4, 2009, the House Resolution 398, "Recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift's success," was introduced in the House. As you know, this measure was sequentially referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

Our Committee recognizes the importance of H.R. 398 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously. Therefore, while we have a valid claim to jurisdiction over this legislation, the Committee on Armed Services will waive further consideration of H.R. 398. I do so with the understanding that by waiving further consideration of the resolution, the Committee does not waive any future jurisdictional claims over similar measures.

I would appreciate the inclusion of this letter and a copy of your response in the Congressional Record during consideration of the measure on the House floor.

Very truly yours,

IKE SKELTON
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, October 14, 2009.

Hon. IKE SKELTON,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, Rayburn House Office Building, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding House Resolution 398, "Recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift's success." This measure was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and sequentially referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

I agree that the Committee on Armed Services has certain valid jurisdictional claims to this resolution, and I appreciate your decision to waive further consideration of H. Res. 398 in the interest of expediting

consideration of this important measure. I agree that by agreeing to waive further consideration, the Committee on Armed Services is not waiving its jurisdictional claims over similar measures in the future.

During consideration of this measure on the House floor, I will ask that this exchange of letters be included in the Congressional Record.

Sincerely,

BOB FILNER,
Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 398 recognizes the 60th anniversary of one of our Nation's most commendable humanitarian airlift operations in history.

As a whole, the United States Armed Forces is equipped with advanced and powerful equipment which gives them significant capabilities used not only for defense but also for humanitarian relief, as was so ably demonstrated in Berlin from July 1948 through September 1949.

During a time of tyrannical regime, the people of Berlin were left without the basic necessities, such as food and heat. The first Skymasters delivered humanitarian relief to the Berlin people, demonstrated our commitment to a free Berlin, and brought hope to all of Eastern Europe.

I am in full support of this resolution which honors the veterans of the Berlin Airlift who lost their lives in the service to their country to bring the means of survival and sustenance to civilians under siege.

The Berlin Airlift embodied the spirit of collaboration, valor, and the goodwill of all mankind. The operation stands as a testament of the perseverance and commitment to excellence of the United States Armed Forces. It is only right to honor the brave men and women involved in the Berlin Airlift who set an example of our faith in the power of freedom and goodness to overcome tyranny.

House Resolution 398 does this, and it honors the men and women of today's Armed Forces who continue to uphold the ideals of integrity, compassion, and liberty demonstrated by those involved in the Berlin Airlift.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 398, a resolution recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift's success.

The Berlin blockade from June 1948 to May 1949 was one of the first major international crises of the Cold War and the first such crisis that resulted in casualties. During the multinational occupation of post-World War II Germany, the Soviet Union blocked the Western Allies' railway and road access to the sectors of Berlin under their control. Their aim was to force the Western powers to allow the Soviet zone to start supplying Berlin with food and fuel, thereby giving the Soviets practical control over the entire city.

The Truman administration reacted quickly by setting up a continual daily

airlift that brought much-needed food and supplies into the city of West Berlin. This airlift lasted until the end of September 1949, even though the Soviet Government yielded and lifted the blockade itself on May 12, 1949. The Berlin Airlift resulted in the total delivery of 1,783,573 tons of supplies by the United States and 541,937 tons of supplies totaling 2,300,000 tons delivered on 277,569 total flights into Berlin.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution not only details a history of the Berlin Airlift, but also provides a list of all the units involved in the heroic effort at that time. The Berlin Airlift sent a clear message to the Soviet Union that the United States was unwavering in its resolve against tyranny in Europe.

I would like to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY), for introducing this legislation, as well as Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for moving the bill as quickly as they could through the subcommittee and to full consideration here on the House floor today.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 398.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, sixty years ago, the United States, joined by Great Britain, Australia, and South Africa embarked on a historic operation to sustain and defend the vulnerable, entrapped people of Berlin, Germany. The Berlin Airlift was a colossal strategic mission that inspired strength and fortitude in those held captive by then Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin's blockade of the Western-held sectors of Berlin. Today, this Congress honors those responsible for this noble feat.

The Veterans of the Berlin Airlift struck the first major blow in the new Cold War, forcing Stalin on May 12, 1949, to lift the blockade that impoverished Germany's capitol, thwarting the fall of the Iron Curtain over the Western strongholds.

These airmen embodied the highest virtues of American air defense, fusing tactical brilliance and innovation with goodness and heart in one of the greatest humanitarian efforts of all time. In providing food, coal, and medical supplies to the besieged citizens of West Berlin, our veterans of the "Greatest Generation" led a seminal goodwill offensive that alleviated the suffering inflicted by a communist regime that threatened not only the peace and prosperity of Berlin, but the peace and prosperity of the world.

As Col. Gail Halvorsen and his colleagues carpeted the streets of Berlin with chocolates and candy during Operation Little Vittles, they drew the hearts and minds of Berlin's children to notions of goodness and liberty, and away from the pervasive communist propaganda that sought to turn them against the West.

As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift, let us remember the veterans who exemplified our highest ideals of brilliance and innovation in air defense, and whose integrity and dedication to liberty have inspired so many vulnerable people throughout the world. Their example renews our faith in the power of freedom and goodness to prevail over tyranny.

As memories of World War II and the Berlin Blockade fade with the passing years, I believe it is even more important to commemorate the spirit of kindness that led our veterans to bring hope and joy to the weary and beleaguered citizens of Berlin. May we honor their legacy and follow their example.

I am grateful for this opportunity to commemorate this noble endeavor and to honor the memory of those who are surely with us in spirit, those who gave the last full measure of devotion to a cause greater than themselves, a cause that changed the course of history for the better.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to unanimously support H. Res. 398, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 398.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF ASSISTANCE DOGS IN HELPING WOUNDED VETERANS

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 291) recognizing the crucial role of assistance dogs in helping wounded veterans live more independent lives, expressing gratitude to The Tower of Hope, and supporting the goals and ideals of creating a Tower of Hope Day.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 291

Whereas the brave men and women defending America's democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan are in harms way;

Whereas thousands of America's returning veterans were seriously wounded in combat, including brain injuries, single and double amputations, and other traumatic wounds;

Whereas these brave soldiers return to the United States and spend weeks, months, and years in hospitals recovering, and return to their homes needing assistance to regain their independence;

Whereas these recovering soldiers who are teamed up with assistance dogs lead more comfortable and more independent lives;

Whereas these dogs provide assistance to wounded veterans while walking, going up and down stairs, and getting up from a sitting or fallen position, and also pick up dropped articles, retrieve items from a distance, pull manual wheelchairs a short distance, turn lights on and off, and perform other important daily tasks;

Whereas assistance animals offer priceless companionship and unconditional love on a daily basis;

Whereas there are fewer than 75 veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan who currently have assistance dogs because they either cannot afford them or do not know about the benefits that assistance dogs provide;

Whereas severely wounded veterans currently have to wait up to two years before they can receive an assistance animal;

Whereas The Tower of Hope was created following the attacks of September 11, 2001, to bring hope to wounded veterans by providing them with assistance dogs at no cost; and

Whereas The Tower of Hope has substantially improved many lives by raising funds for the training of assistance dogs, providing grants for American combat wounded veterans, and advocating for the benefits of these animals: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) acknowledges the importance of assistance dogs in helping combat-wounded veterans live happier and more independent lives;

(2) applauds the outstanding work of The Tower of Hope and its dedication to training and providing assistance dogs to wounded veterans, as well as educating people about the benefits of such animals;

(3) expresses deep gratitude and support to volunteers and donors who have made this great program possible by generously offering time and funds;

(4) encourages the general public to support wounded veterans by volunteering or donating to help train assistance dogs;

(5) calls for a vigorous promotion of, and advocacy for, the benefits of assistance animals for physicians and the general public; and

(6) supports the goals and ideals of creating a Tower of Hope Day in honor of wounded American veterans and their service dogs, the work of The Tower of Hope, and the many generous donors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 291, a resolution to recognize The Tower of Hope and the importance of assistance dogs. I truly believe the lives of our wounded veterans are enhanced by the role of assistance dogs that help them live more independently. The Tower of Hope has dedicated their time and effort to raise funds to train service dogs, advocate for the benefit of such valuable animals, and award grants to our wounded veterans.

□ 1530

The Tower of Hope is an organization that was founded by Ms. Cathy Carilli, whose husband, Tom Sinton, died in the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. As a tribute to the memory of her husband, The Tower of Hope was established and plays a major role in helping those seriously wounded in the war that almost immediately followed the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Many servicemembers are coming home with serious injuries and currently have to wait up to 2 years before they can receive an assistance animal. Many cannot afford them or do not know about the benefits that assistance dogs provide. House Resolution 291 would help overcome these barriers by bringing more recognition to this organization that provides assistance dogs at no cost, educates the public about the benefits of such animals, and brings hope to our wounded heroes. It can cost up to \$20,000 to train a service dog, and I recognize The Tower of Hope for providing these valuable animals at no cost to our wounded warriors. Their work is truly admirable.

These costs are not covered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, but by national and local organizations and generous donors. I am confident that this resolution will help promote the benefits of assistance dogs and express support to all organizations, volunteers, and donors that make such programs possible.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the support of House Resolution 291.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 291, a resolution recognizing the role of assistance dogs in helping wounded veterans live more independent lives, expressing gratitude to The Tower of Hope, and supporting the goals and ideals of creating a Tower of Hope Day.

Founded in 2006, The Tower of Hope is one of many organizations across the Nation providing and training assistance dogs to help individuals with disabilities. Assistance dogs not only provide a specific service to their handlers, but also greatly enhance their lives with a new sense of freedom and independence.

Training an assistance dog is fairly expensive. An individual dog trained for placement can cost upwards of around \$25,000 in care and training costs, and training takes around 18 months to complete.

With so many veterans in need of this type of help, it is important for us to focus on this need and provide encouragement to organizations such as The Tower of Hope working toward helping these veterans. Individual citizens can check to see if there is an organization in their State providing training to assistance dogs and whether these dogs are being provided to servicemembers by checking the Assistance Dogs International North America Web site.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, for introducing this legislation and bringing to our attention the importance of these service dogs to our wounded warriors. I would also like to thank Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for moving the bill so quickly to the floor for consideration.

I urge all my colleagues to support H. Res. 291.

I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 291.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. I would also like to thank my colleagues who were involved in pushing this bill forward, with a special thank you to our colleague from Florida, Mr. HASTINGS, for his unwavering support of our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to unanimously support this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 291.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

NATIONAL VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT WEEK

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 866) expressing support for designation of a National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in a nationwide project that collects and preserves the stories of the men and women who served our nation in times of war and conflict.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 866

Whereas the Veterans History Project was established by a unanimous vote of the United States Congress to collect and preserve the wartime stories of American veterans;

Whereas Congress charged the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress to undertake the Veterans History Project and to engage the public in the creation of a collection of oral histories that would be a lasting tribute to individual veterans and an abundant resource for scholars;

Whereas there are 17,000,000 wartime veterans in America whose stories can educate people of all ages about important moments and events in the history of the United States and the world and provide instructive narratives that illuminate the meanings of "service", "sacrifice", "citizenship", and "democracy";

Whereas the Veterans History Project relies on a corps of volunteer interviewers, partner organizations, and an array of civic

minded institutions nationwide who interview veterans according to the guidelines it provides;

Whereas increasing public participation in the Veterans History Project will increase the number of oral histories that can be collected and preserved and increase the number of veterans it so honors; and

Whereas "National Veterans Awareness Week" commendably preceded this resolution in the years 2005 and 2006: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes "National Veterans Awareness Week";

(2) supports the designation of a "National Veterans History Project Week";

(3) calls on the people of the United States to interview at least one veteran in their families or communities according to guidelines provided by the Veterans History Project; and

(4) encourages local, State, and national organizations along with Federal, State, city and county governmental institutions to participate in support of the effort to document, preserve, and honor the service of American wartime veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Abraham Lincoln, in the Gettysburg Address, stated that the "world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here." In that spirit, Congress created the Veterans History Project in 2000. The goal of the project is to capture the personal stories of our Nation's heroes so that our children and their children can more fully understand the history of this great Nation.

The project directed the Library of Congress to establish a national archive for the collection and preservation of videotaped oral histories of our veterans, as well as the copying of letters written during their time in service and diaries they kept so there is a national repository of this very important part of our Nation's history. This is a worthwhile investment of time and resources and is a gift that can be given for generations and centuries to come.

There are more than 23 million veterans living in this country today, including the 3 million veterans of World War II. It is important that these stories are told, and it is more important that these stories are told from the mouths of those who were on the front lines and participated firsthand as history was made.

This resolution before us today, House Resolution 866, calls on the people of the United States to interview at least one veteran in their family or community according to guidelines provided by the Veterans History Project.

I would like to thank all the volunteers from across this country, not

only the veterans who have shared their stories, but their family members and friends that have helped to capture their accounts.

Volunteers and participants become historians themselves; they can collect video and audio recordings, create a collection of recordings to be available for public use, or collect written materials relevant to personal histories of all war veterans.

I encourage all Americans to reach out and thank the veterans they know, and their families, for their amazing sacrifice, learn more about their great contributions to our country, gain the wisdom of their personal stories of our Nation's history, and participate in the Veterans History Project.

As the chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee has said, he has had the opportunity to hear many accounts from many veterans. He hears the sense of pride that comes with them, as do each of us who defended our country.

This Veterans Day, and the whole year through, join me and take the time to show your gratitude to those who have answered the call to duty.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the chairman, Chairman FILNER, Ranking Member BUYER, and all members of the committee, and a special thank you to Representative RON KIND who introduced this to me.

As a schoolteacher and someone who understands the value of these oral histories, this is an incredible archive. The support of this project cannot be overstated. It is going to be something that will allow generations to come to understand what this country was built upon, and they will have it as a resource to access at any time.

So, again, I thank everyone involved in this project.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H. Res. 866, a resolution expressing support for the designation of a National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in a nationwide project that collects and preserves the stories of the men and women who served our Nation at times of war and conflict.

The National Veterans History Project was created by P.L. 106-380, which was signed into law by President Clinton on October 27, 2000. It is housed in the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress and contains firsthand accounts of veterans from every armed service conflict since World War I. The online database contains records of over 70,000 veterans and will continue to be a wonderful resource to inform and inspire all Americans for generations to come.

In reviewing this collection of information on veterans, you can find the stories in the collection of our only remaining American veteran of World War I, Frank Buckles. His digital collection contains both video and audio

records of his time serving as a corporal in World War I. We also have stories from the most current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan in the collection.

To have this personal record is so important to the history and nature of our country as it provides our Nation with the unique perspective of what it's like serving on the ground, a point of view often lost in the history books. Mr. Speaker, it is by preserving these stories and records that the past is shared with the future and lessons can be learned.

I highly encourage all veterans to participate in the Veterans History Project and support this resolution for the designation of National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in this nationwide collection of stories.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues, Mr. KIND of Wisconsin and Mr. WAMP of Tennessee, for introducing this bipartisan legislation, and Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for moving the bill so quickly to the floor for consideration.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H. Res. 866.

I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 866.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Again, I, too, want to thank Mr. WAMP, Mr. KIND, and everyone involved in this; it is absolutely appropriate as next week we stop to remember Veterans Day. This project does so all year and for generations to come. I urge unanimous support of this resolution.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today in support of H. Res. 866, which expresses support for designation of a National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in a nationwide project that collects and preserves the stories of the men and women who served our nation in times of war and conflict. I support this resolution because the preservation of our country's history, as told by the men and women of the armed services, is a valuable piece of our nation's heritage and merits our wholehearted endorsement.

The Veterans History Project was established in 2000 by the Veteran's Oral History Project Act, which I was proud to support as a cosponsor. We knew then, as we know now, that the experience of our nation's veterans is a vital part of the history of military conflicts. The Congress unanimously supported the legislation, a testament to the necessity of this effort.

The American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress was charged by Congress to initiate and oversee the Veterans History Project. Its task is to engage the public to create a collection of oral histories, which would be available for scholars. The Veterans History Project

is operated by volunteer interviewers, partner organizations, and an array of institutions' dedicated to the preservation of the United States' heritage. Interviews with American war veterans and the civilian workers who supported the veterans are conducted according to the guidelines provided by the Project. The Veterans History Project collects the memories and remembrances of veterans who served in World War I, World War II, the Cold War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War, and the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. So far, the Veterans History Project has collected over 66,000 oral histories, pictures, and diary entries from American men and women who served their country on the battlefield and at home. The stories are made available at the Library of Congress and on the Veterans History Project website for everyone to study and experience.

I would like to acknowledge that there are two official partner organizations assisting this project in my home state of Texas. The first is the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) located in Irving, Texas. The second is the LULAC-Daughters and Mothers Assisting Success Program located in Dallas, Texas. I am proud of the generosity of these organizations that are willing to donate their time to honor veterans and preserve veterans' history.

Veterans History Project Week highlights the need to collect and preserve the personal narratives of the men and women who have served the United States in times of war and conflict. The collection of personal experiences of U.S. service men and women will be a vital part of the historical record that will help future scholars understand the conflicts. There are over 23 million wartime veterans in America whose personal narratives can elucidate both the experience of armed conflict throughout time and the proceedings of the conflicts themselves.

This resolution is a timely reminder of the importance of acting quickly to preserve the experience of U.S. veterans. Approximately 40 percent of veterans are 65 years old or over. Of the 2.6 million World War II veterans who were alive in 2008, we are losing nearly 900 on average each day. We must not let time irreversibly claim the memories that are our nation's heritage.

The Veterans History Project also serves as a tribute to the men and women who have fought our country's battles or supported the effort at home. Collecting and preserving the personal narratives of veterans for historical records demonstrates the importance of the individual experiences. The voices of veterans will be available to be heard by future students of history and their experience will remain alive.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution and the effort to preserve the memory of those who have served our country in times of war and conflict are an invaluable part of preserving our country's heritage.

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 866, expressing support for designation of a National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in a nationwide project that collects and preserves the stories of the men and women who served our nation in times of war and conflict. I joined with my colleague, Mr. KIND, to introduce this legislation.

Our Nation loses at least 1,000 veterans every day, and along with them we lose their

stories of courage and memories of comradeship and sacrifice. In October 2000, Congress recognized the urgency of collecting these wartime memories, accounts and documents and created the Veterans History Project.

Today we honor all the lives of veterans and the project by supporting the designation of National Veterans History Project Week. We encourage Americans to join in the effort to preserve and honor the service of our wartime veterans by interviewing those in their families and communities to contribute to the Veteran's History Project. It is a unique opportunity to help document the personal accounts of our Nation's veterans for today's generation and future Americans.

More than 600 stories of veterans in the Tennessee Valley have been permanently archived at the Library of Congress as part of the Veterans History project. More than 100 of these local veterans' memories were aired on Chattanooga's WRCB-TV. Through WRCB's television coverage, many veterans were inspired to share their stories and more were collected than we could have ever expected. Some of these memories include those of fresh-faced high school graduates who stormed the beaches of Normandy on D-day, officers who fought through the Battle of the Bulge and left Europe as decorated heroes, and young women who voluntarily served in the Army Corps of Nurses helping our soldiers heal from their battle wounds. Theirs are the stories we may not have heard if not for the Veterans History Project.

Our Nation's history of freedom is passed down from one generation to the next by American patriots who were willing to stand between a threat and our civilian population. It is essential that we work together to preserve their memories and experiences for future generations who have much to learn from those who have so honorably served our Nation.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 866.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

HONORING SENTINELS OF FREEDOM

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 461) honoring Sentinels of Freedom and commending the dedication, commitment, and extraordinary work of the organization.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 461

Whereas in 2003, Sentinels of Freedom, based in San Ramon and Danville, California, was established;

Whereas the mission of Sentinels of Freedom is to provide life-changing opportunities for men and women who served in the United States Armed Forces and who have suffered severe injuries;

Whereas the Sentinels of Freedom Scholarship Foundation was created to benefit qualified veterans severely injured in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001;

Whereas Sentinels of Freedom provides four-year scholarships that help veterans to become self-sufficient;

Whereas scholarship recipients receive support to enroll in school, find and maintain a job, and obtain housing;

Whereas Sentinels of Freedom organizes teams of local volunteers that provide mentoring and moral support for scholarship recipients;

Whereas Sentinels of Freedom has excelled in providing assistance to veterans; and

Whereas thanks to Sentinels of Freedom, 39 veterans have benefitted from scholarships and many more will in the coming years; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors Sentinels of Freedom;

(2) commends Sentinels of Freedom's dedication and commitment to the brave men and women who have served the United States; and

(3) praises Sentinels of Freedom for its extraordinary work for the well-being of the Nation's veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I stand in full support of House Resolution 461 to honor the Sentinels of Freedom Scholarship Foundation.

Sentinels of Freedom is an organization that provides support and opportunities to selected veterans with injuries sustaining 60 percent or higher levels of disability in all branches of our military post-9/11. They provide significant support in assisting our veterans to readjust back to civilian life and prosper in their hometowns or new communities.

Each of the past recipients of the Sentinels of Freedom scholarship has an inspiring story of recovery. Many of them have lived through injuries which they were not expected to survive and further endured many surgeries and months of recovery. For example, Army veteran Jake Brown accepted the first Sentinels of Freedom Scholarship in 2004. Crushed by a tank while serving in Germany, he was in a coma for 10 days and was not expected to live, but now he is back in his hometown and he is thriving.

Jake returned to his hometown of San Ramon, California, with his wife and currently works for UPS, where he has earned two promotions. He is also on the dean's list at Diablo Valley College. He has dreams of ultimately at-

tending UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business. Despite having life-altering physical handicaps, veterans like Jake Brown are grateful to be alive and continue to prosper in their communities.

As Mike Conklin, chairman and CEO of Sentinels of Freedom, describes, the program is not a charity but rather an investment in the life of a person who has served our Nation and has earned the right to achieve his or her part of the American Dream.

As our veterans return home from war, it is fitting to have House Resolution 461 before us today. I am grateful to have the Sentinels of Freedom and other organizations that assist our wounded veterans and shed light and let them achieve their dreams.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H. Res. 461, a resolution honoring the Sentinels of Freedom and commending the dedication, commitment, and extraordinary work of the organization.

The bills we have passed this year will make enormous strides in helping our Nation's veterans improve their lives.

□ 1545

However, the Federal Government cannot do this job alone. It is through the work of organizations like the Sentinels of Freedom that our injured veterans can get back on the road to self-sufficiency.

Started by the father of three Army Rangers after one of his sons was wounded in Iraq in 2003, this 2- to 4-year life scholarship program is meant to assist veterans with severe service-related injuries who have the aptitude, attitude, and drive to become independent and successful members of society. The scholarship recipients are called "sentinels" in honor of their sacrifice and commitment to guarding America's freedoms. Over 32 service-members have joined the Sentinels of Freedom program. These sentinels are flourishing because of the help and assistance they have received from volunteers in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and fellow committee member Mr. McNERNEY of California for introducing this legislation to honor the work and dedication of the Sentinels of Freedom, as well as to thank the many volunteers working with this organization all across the country to help our injured service-members move back into society.

I would also like to thank Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for moving the bill so quickly to the floor for consideration.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H. Res. 461.

Mr. Speaker, having no further speakers, again, I urge the passage of this very important resolution; and I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may

have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on House Resolution 461.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I, too, urge my colleagues to unanimously support this resolution.

I want to thank Mr. McNERNEY from California for the inspiring story of Jake and for bringing this piece of legislation to the floor—again, absolutely appropriate the week before Veterans Day.

I have no further requests for time, and I yield back all remaining time, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 461.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 509) to authorize a major medical facility project at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Walla Walla, Washington, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 509

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER, WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON.

(a) AUTHORIZATION FOR MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECT.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out a major medical facility project for the construction of a new multiple specialty outpatient facility, campus renovation and upgrades, and additional parking at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Walla Walla, Washington, with the project to be carried out in an amount not to exceed \$71,400,000.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2009 for the Construction, Major Projects account, \$71,400,000 for the project authorized in subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DRIEHAUS). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 509, a bill to authorize a new outpatient clinic at the Jonathan M.

Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center in Walla Walla, Washington.

This bill would authorize appropriations of \$71 million for the VA's construction and major projects account in fiscal year 2009. This funding would be used to design and construct a 65,000-square-foot outpatient clinic which will serve nearly 70,000 veterans in the Walla Walla area.

It has been a long journey since July 2003 when the VA was trying to close the Walla Walla facility. There have been challenges along the way, especially with the CARES Commission's decision in February of 2004, which formally recommended closing this facility.

However, we managed to do right by our veterans in the Walla Walla area by removing this facility from the VA's facility closure list and by getting the VA to include the construction of an outpatient clinic at the Walla Walla VA Medical Center in the fiscal year 2009 major construction priority list.

All of this would not have been possible without the leadership, hard work, and advocacy of Senator MURRAY.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to personally thank Senator MURRAY for introducing this bill and to thank Chairman AKAKA of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee for moving the bill forward. I know how incredibly important it is to our veterans, especially to those in more rural areas, to get the care they need, so I strongly support the passage of S. 509.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 509, a bill to authorize a major medical facility project at the Department of Veterans Affairs' medical center in Walla Walla, Washington.

S. 509 would facilitate the construction of a new outpatient clinic building, consolidating the administrative and support functions that are currently spread across Walla Walla's 88-acre campus. This new outpatient clinic building will allow for the integration of primary and specialty care as well as for mental health and ancillary services into a single state-of-the-art facility.

S. 509 has the full support of the Washington delegation. It is important to note that funding for this bill has already been appropriated. The funding must now be authorized so that we can move forward with the proposed improvements to the Walla Walla facility.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support S. 509 and the improvements it will provide to veteran's medical care, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. We have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he might consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN).

Mr. WALDEN. I want to thank my colleague from Arkansas.

Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of S. 509, which would authorize the VA to construct this new, multiple specialty outpatient clinic building as the Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center in Walla Walla, Washington.

Now the Walla Walla VA Medical Center serves more than 65,000 veterans in a 14-county area that spreads over northeastern Oregon, southeastern Washington and central western Idaho. It's an integral part of the VA's Northwest health care network and has long established itself as a very important resource for veterans and the veterans community.

Now, the construction of this outpatient clinic, along with campus renovations, upgrades and additional parking, will help this facility better serve our men and women who have worn our uniform. This investment in the Walla Walla VA Medical Center will cement its place as a provider of health care to veterans in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho by providing them with a modern facility that will improve quality-of-care delivery and that will continue to allow them to provide the best care possible.

Since 2003, when the VA's Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services, or CARES, Commission released its draft recommendation for the closure of this facility, veterans have rightfully raised concerns about the future of VA-delivered health care in this very rural region of our country. These veterans face the real possibility of having to drive hundreds of more miles to receive even the most routine care at the next closest VA facilities, which are located in Boise, Idaho; in Portland, Oregon; or in Spokane, Washington.

Like others in 2003, I voiced my strong concerns regarding the proposed realignment through a letter to then-Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Anthony Principi, and I submitted testimony to the CARES Commission. Through concerted efforts by area veterans, local advocates and elected officials, former-VA Secretary Jim Nicholson fully realized the importance of the care provided in this facility and reversed the commission's decision.

Today, the Walla Walla VA Medical Center continues to make a name for itself through the quality of care that it provides to our veterans. I was there in December of 2008, and I had the opportunity to meet with the new director of the Walla Walla VA Medical Center, Mr. Brian Westfield, and to receive an update on the facility, which has recently expanded its reaches into my congressional district through the opening of a very important clinic, a community outpatient clinic in La Grande, Oregon.

Last fall, the VA approved \$71.4 million to design and construct this new, multiple specialty outpatient clinic in Walla Walla. The legislation we con-

sider today would authorize that project. It is my hope that, with the completion of this clinic, the Walla Walla VA Medical Center will continue its tradition of providing quality care to the men and women who have given so much in service to our Nation.

So I thank you again for the opportunity to speak in favor of Senate bill 509. I thank Senator MURRAY for bringing this forward, and I thank members of both the Oregon and Washington delegations and of the Idaho delegation for their support. I look forward to the passage of this legislation.

Mr. WALZ. We have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I just want to thank, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Oregon for sharing with us and for showing us that this is not only bipartisan but that it is also a tri-State effort to get this done. So I think that further illustrates the importance.

I would like to thank our committee chairman, BOB FILNER, and Ranking Member STEVE BUYER for moving the bill forward for consideration. I urge all of my colleagues to support S. 509.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on S. 509.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I, too, urge my colleagues to unanimously support this.

I want to thank the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) for so eloquently and clearly stating the need for this. Our rural veterans need this. This would have been a mistake to not extend this facility, and I appreciate your hard work to get this done.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize this critical bipartisan legislation which authorizes the construction of a new outpatient clinic at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center (VAMC) in Walla Walla, Washington.

After listening to the concerns of the providers within the facility, local civic leaders, veterans and constituents, it is clear this facility is vital to making a number of services available to our veterans who are at risk of receiving a lower quality of health care if they are forced to seek services outside of the facility.

Veterans seeking health care rely heavily on the Walla Walla facility because of the geographic and climactic challenges in the region. This facility provides care to 65,000 veterans over 14 different counties in Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho and Northeastern Oregon covering 42,000 square miles. More than 11,000 veterans use this facility. We expect this number to increase as more service men and women return from deployments.

The staff at the Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center work hard for the

veterans our region. However, they are in desperate need of a new, modern facility that will facilitate the quality of care our deserving veterans require.

In February 2008, I asked Secretary James Peake to allocate these funds before 2010, rather than the 2012 original plan. Last fall, the VA approved \$71.4 million to design and construct a new multiple-specialty outpatient facility at the Walla Walla VAMC. However, authorization was still needed for the project. This bill gives construction the necessary green light.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting the veterans who are served by the Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center.

Mr. MINNICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to lend my strong support to Senate bill 509. This bipartisan legislation will authorize the construction of a new outpatient clinic at the VA Medical Center in Walla Walla, Washington. The Walla Walla VA hospital provides vital medical care to thousands of veterans from Idaho and a new state-of-the-art facility will allow the hospital to provide expanded services to the members of our armed forces.

As more of our troops continue to return home from their deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is crucial that they receive the timely and effective care they deserve. And with Veterans Day just around the corner, this is an excellent opportunity to honor those who have sacrificed so much for our country. I urge my colleagues to join me in passing this important legislation.

I thank Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for their strong leadership and continued commitment to improving the lives of veterans.

Mr. WALZ. With that, Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 509.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

MAX J. BEILKE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CENTER

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3157) to name the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Alexandria, Minnesota, as the "Max J. Beilke Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3157

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. NAME OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CLINIC, ALEXANDRIA, MINNESOTA.

The Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Alexandria, Minnesota, expected to open in September 2009, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Max J. Beilke Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic". Any reference to such outpatient clinic in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the Max J. Beilke Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my support of H.R. 3157, a bill to name a VA outpatient clinic in Alexandria, Minnesota, in memory of Master Sergeant Max J. Beilke.

Master Sergeant Beilke served in the United States Army for 22 years, and he retired from service in 1974. On September 11, 2001, Max Beilke was at the Pentagon. Mr. Beilke was killed in the terrorist attack on the Pentagon on that day. After a lifetime of military service, Sergeant Beilke was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. He was awarded the Defense of Freedom Medal and the Meritorious Civilian Service Award.

While in the Army, Mr. Beilke played a vital role in evacuating U.S. troops from Saigon and is officially listed as the last U.S. combat soldier to leave Vietnam on March 29, 1973, at the end of the Vietnam War.

Max Beilke served overseas in Germany, Korea and Vietnam and was an ROTC instructor at St. Thomas Military Academy in St. Paul, Minnesota. While in the service, Sergeant Beilke earned a bachelor of arts degree in business administration by attending night school at the University of Maryland. He later earned a master's of arts degree in personnel management in 1977 from Central Michigan University.

Sergeant Beilke retired from active duty in 1974, but remained dedicated to the service of our soldiers, to the veterans and to their families. The driving force of Mr. Beilke's life was caring for soldiers and their needs. He was instrumental in getting Congress to pass the TRICARE for Life program for military retirees. For this, he was named a TRICARE hero. From 1984 until September 11, 2001, Mr. Beilke served as deputy chief of the Army Retirement Services, and was an active member of the Army Chief of Staff Retiree Council.

Master Sergeant Max Beilke left behind his wife, two daughters, and three grandsons. Master Sergeant Beilke was a true friend to thousands of Army retirees and was of one of Alexandria, Minnesota's and this country's most distinguished heroes.

In recognition of his commendable service to our soldiers and veterans alike, H.R. 3157 is supported by State and local dignitaries from the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, the United Veterans Legislative Council of Minnesota, and the Department of the Army.

H.R. 3157 would name the new Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Alexandria, Minnesota, as the Max J. Beilke Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic. Naming a VA facility for Master Sergeant Beilke, a hero and a strong advocate of veterans, is the proper and honorable thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3157, a bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Alexandria, Minnesota, as the Max J. Beilke Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic.

I also want to thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) for bringing this very important legislation forward.

□ 1600

Master Sergeant Max J. Beilke, United States Army, served 22 years' active duty and was stationed overseas in Germany, Korea, and Vietnam. Master Sergeant Beilke was officially listed as the last U.S. combat soldier to leave Vietnam on March 29, 1973.

Following his retirement from active duty in 1974, Master Sergeant Beilke continued his commitment to U.S. servicemembers and veterans by working with Congress to pass the TRICARE For Life program for military retirees. For his services, Master Sergeant Beilke was named a TRICARE Hero and continued his efforts by working on legislation to create a veterans survivors benefit program.

It was while working on this bill at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, that Master Sergeant Beilke was killed in the terrorist attack that struck that day. For his dedicated services to the United States military and veteran populations, Master Sergeant Beilke was awarded the Defense of Freedom Medal from the Department of Defense and Meritorious Civilian Service Award from the Department of the Army, both posthumously.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 3157 in recognition of the service and sacrifice made by Master Sergeant Max Beilke for his country.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this very important bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman and my neighbor from Minnesota, Mr. PETERSON, someone who understands the needs of rural Minnesota and our rural veterans as well as anybody in this

House and in this country, and understands how important these outpatient clinics are and the incredible honor and why it's right to name this clinic for a true Minnesota hero.

Mr. PETERSON. I thank the gentleman, thank him and the gentleman from Arkansas for letting me have a couple of minutes.

I think you have already covered all or most of my speech, but we are very honored to be able to name the outpatient clinic in Alexandria after a true American hero, Mr. Max Beilke, who grew up on a small farm near Alexandria, Minnesota.

He was a 1950 graduate of Alexandria High School. He was drafted into the Army and sent to Korea in 1952. Shortly after he returned home from his tour of service in Korea, he reenlisted and made the Army his full-time career.

Max served in Korea, Germany and, lastly, Vietnam, where he, during his 8-month tour, served as operations sergeant at Camp Alpha in Saigon, where all soldiers were processed going to and coming from the United States. As was noted, he was the last combat soldier to leave Vietnam while his family watched on television.

After 21 years in the Army, Max retired in 1974 as a master sergeant. Eventually, he settled in Laurel, Maryland, where he lived with his wife, Lisa, and raised two daughters. After retiring from the Army, he earned a master's degree from Central Michigan University.

As was noted, Max was very instrumental in establishing the TRICARE system for our veterans, and it was because of that he was at the Pentagon on September 11 and met his untimely death on that day. He was laid to rest on December 11 in Arlington National Cemetery.

He had a distinguished career in the Army and as a civilian. He has the support of all Minnesotans and all our veterans organizations. He very much deserves to have this clinic named after him.

I want to commend the VA for opening this clinic. I think this is the fifth clinic that they have opened in my district. It was proposed in 2004, and we had the grand opening ceremony just last month. For too long rural veterans in my district have had to travel too far for health care, but this clinic will bring veterans' health care services closer to all the veterans who live in that area. The VA estimates that it will serve 3,500 local veterans with primary care and mental health care and will provide a variety of other services as well.

I urge the House to pass this legislation.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, again I would like to thank Mr. PETERSON, the gentleman from Minnesota, for bringing this forward. We very strongly support this bill. It's great that we honor a true American hero, not only for his service connection and how he served in the military, but how he led his life.

Again, we urge all of our colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3157.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I, too, urge my colleagues to unanimously support H.R. 3157. I thank the gentleman from Minnesota for highlighting this, telling one of those stories of heroism, one of those stories of selfless service and then tying it to something that's incredibly important as we move forward—rural care for our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3157.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL VETERANS CEMETERY IN SOUTHERN COLORADO REGION

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 174) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a national cemetery for veterans in the southern Colorado region.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 174

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL CEMETERY IN SOUTHERN COLORADO REGION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish, in accordance with chapter 24 of title 38, United States Code, a national cemetery in El Paso County, Colorado, to serve the needs of veterans and their families in the southern Colorado region.

(b) CONSULTATION IN SELECTION OF SITE.—Before selecting the site for the national cemetery established under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with—

(1) appropriate officials of the State of Colorado and local officials in the southern Colorado region; and

(2) appropriate officials of the United States, including the Administrator of General Services, with respect to land belonging

to the United States in El Paso County, Colorado, that would be suitable to establish the national cemetery under subsection (a).

(c) AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT DONATION OF PARCEL OF LAND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may accept on behalf of the United States the gift of an appropriate parcel of real property. The Secretary shall have administrative jurisdiction over such parcel of real property, and shall use such parcel to establish the national cemetery under subsection (a).

(2) INCOME TAX TREATMENT OF GIFT.—For purposes of Federal income, estate, and gift taxes, the real property accepted under paragraph (1) shall be considered as a gift to the United States.

(d) REPORT.—As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the establishment of the national cemetery under subsection (a). The report shall set forth a schedule for such establishment and an estimate of the costs associated with such establishment.

(e) RELATIONSHIP TO CONSTRUCTION AND FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN.—The requirement to establish a national cemetery under subsection (a) shall be added to the current list of priority projects, but should not take priority over existing projects listed on the National Cemetery Administration's construction and five-year capital plan for fiscal year 2008.

(f) SOUTHERN COLORADO REGION DEFINED.—In this Act, the term "southern Colorado region" means the geographic region consisting of the following Colorado counties:

- (1) El Paso.
- (2) Pueblo.
- (3) Teller.
- (4) Fremont.
- (5) Las Animas.
- (6) Huerfano.
- (7) Custer.
- (8) Costilla.
- (9) Alamosa.
- (10) Saguache.
- (11) Conejos.
- (12) Mineral.
- (13) Archuleta.
- (14) Hinsdale.
- (15) Gunnison.
- (16) Pitkin.
- (17) La Plata.
- (18) Montezuma.
- (19) San Juan.
- (20) Ouray.
- (21) San Miguel.
- (22) Dolores.
- (23) Montrose.
- (24) Delta.
- (25) Mesa.
- (26) Crowley.
- (27) Kiowa.
- (28) Bent.
- (29) Baca.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, while I am pleased to be here today to bring H.R. 174, I think it's probably too light to say sponsored by our former colleague on the committee, Mr. SALAZAR, to the floor today. This bill will establish a national veterans cemetery in El Paso County, Colorado.

Just for background note, Mr. SALAZAR, who has moved on to another committee, has been a tireless advocate of our veterans, and this was a piece of legislation that I watched him advocate for with great passion because of the need. Southern Colorado, including El Paso County and the city of Colorado Springs, has the second highest concentration of veterans living in the entire United States.

Currently, those veterans in southern Colorado and their families who wish to either visit a veterans cemetery or have their loved ones interred must travel into the Denver metropolitan area to Fort Logan National Cemetery in often treacherous weather conditions. Not only is this an undue burden, but the Fort Logan National Cemetery is quickly running out of spaces.

To alleviate this problem, H.R. 174 directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a national cemetery for veterans in El Paso County, Colorado.

H.R. 174 reflects a fitting tribute to those Americans who have served our Nation with honor. The veterans' national cemeteries of the United States demonstrate the desire of a grateful Nation to appropriately commemorate those who served in our Armed Forces.

Since 1862, more than 3 million burials have occurred in VA national cemeteries. The National Cemetery Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs manages 130 national cemeteries nationwide for our veterans. Of the 130 cemeteries, 60 of them are no longer accepting in-ground interments, which results in millions of veterans and survivors being unserved and turned away from our national cemeteries.

While the State Cemetery Grants Program has met with success, the need to build new national cemeteries with a strategic vision is really still quite urgent. This is why Mr. SALAZAR introduced this bill and a related bill, the National Cemeteries Expansion Act of 2009, H.R. 3544, which would require the VA to reexamine its entire national cemetery establishment policy standard of 170,000 veterans in a 75-mile radius. This policy clearly has outlived its usefulness and should be revised immediately.

I want to thank Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for pushing this bill forward. As we lose more of our Greatest Generation of veterans and face the unfortunate prospect of additional fatalities, we need to make certain that veterans are provided a dignified, accessible, and well-maintained final resting place. H.R. 174 helps to ensure that this happens for the many veterans and survivors of the region of southern Colorado.

Also, I would like to add that in the past this bill enjoyed the support of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, and the Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Finally, I again want to applaud the leadership of Mr. SALAZAR on this bill,

the bipartisan manner of the VA Committee understanding how important this is. Mr. LAMBORN, from Colorado Springs, has been intricate in making this happen.

I can tell you this is one of the most moving and passionate discussions we have in the VA. The commitment to making sure national cemeteries are accessible to our veterans is a key priority.

I urge the passage of H.R. 174.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 174, which would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to construct a new national cemetery in southern Colorado. Providing our veterans with a place of honor and repose is one of the most sacred missions of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and we have given this mission our unstinting support over the years.

The National Cemetery Administration's record of high satisfaction among the families of its beneficiaries is the envy of the Federal Government and is a reflection of sound administration and strong congressional support, free of political influence. The Department of Veterans Affairs has a well-established and proven method that uses distance and demographics to select new cemetery sites.

While I believe that the VA process has its flaws and could use revision, it is the established process. Congress has long deferred to this process, which is essentially free from political pressure. Since 1999, Congress has authorized 12 new national cemeteries, all of which went through this process. A recent program evaluation of this policy revealed that there are some weaknesses in this policy and made several recommendations on how to better serve veterans and their families.

One such recommendation was to reduce the population threshold so that each cemetery would serve a population to as little as 120,000 veterans. The current population level is 170,000 veterans. VA is continuing to review the evaluation.

It is because of this process that Mr. STEARNS of Florida offered an amendment that was accepted for H.R. 1660, which is the predecessor of H.R. 174 from the 110th Congress. The amendment was intended to ensure that any new cemetery authorized by this bill would not displace cemetery projects in areas previously identified as priorities. This language preserves the integrity of the cemetery planning process.

I thank the original sponsors of the bill, Mr. SALAZAR and Mr. LAMBORN, for including this language in this year's bill, and I am very pleased to support it.

Having no further speakers, again, I just want to echo what Mr. WALZ said earlier, that this is one of the most important functions that the Veterans' Affairs Committee does and has done it

very, very well through the years. This is a very bipartisan bill.

I urge all of our Members to support this very, very important bill as it goes forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 174.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to thank Mr. BOOZMAN for his eloquent words and his passion on this issue. This is truly an issue that unites every Member of this House and every member of this country, the care and the dignity that we lay our veterans to rest.

I want to thank Mr. SALAZAR and Mr. LAMBORN again for their unwavering commitment to getting this done.

I urge my colleagues to unanimously support H.R. 174.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 174, directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a national cemetery south of Colorado Springs, to serve the veterans and families of southern Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, Coloradans take great pride in serving our nation.

As a veteran myself, I am proud to represent a district that is home to 70,000 of Colorado's almost 427,000 veterans.

Generations of Coloradans have stood in the service of our nation with pride.

In sharing that pride, our nation must also show its gratitude when our veterans pass away.

During this difficult time, it eases a family's burden when seeing their loved one interred at a veteran's cemetery and to witness their sacrifices being remembered by the nation they served.

However, we are faced with a situation where current standards place many VA cemeteries closer to large metropolitan areas.

In my home state alone, there are 150,000 veterans in the 29 designated southern Colorado counties that are waiting for an accessible veteran's cemetery.

Such policies punish our veterans for choosing to be buried in the small towns where they chose to live and raise their families.

It is wrong to force families to travel many hours and hundreds of miles to visit the final resting place of their loved ones.

As it stands, veterans and their families living in southern Colorado have the option of either making the difficult journey north to Ft. Logan in Denver or east to Ft. Lyons in Las Animas.

With these facilities, families have found themselves forced to travel extreme distances over rough terrain in unpredictable weather.

Since 1862, more than three million burials have been made in VA national cemeteries.

National cemeteries are the testimony of a grateful nation to appropriately commemorate the Americans who have served our nation in the armed forces.

Of the 120 cemeteries the VA National Cemetery Administration manages, 58 of them are no longer accepting interments. In anticipation of this, a cemetery in southern Colorado would extend the life of Ft. Logan and Ft. Lyon.

Families would no longer have to travel to these distant locations and instead could bury their loved ones closer to home.

In doing so, space that would otherwise be used at Ft. Logan and Ft. Lyon would remain available for families closer to Denver and Las Animas.

On May 2, 2008 the House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Disability and Memorial Affairs held a field hearing in Colorado Springs, Colorado to review the need for a cemetery in southern Colorado.

The hearing was presided over by Chairman JOHN HALL, Representative DOUG LAMBORN and myself.

Veterans Advocates, VSO's and widows with Gold Star Wives gave testimony in support of the legislation and reinforced the need for such a cemetery.

After hearing testimony and having experienced the difficult driving conditions and an abrupt snow storm, particularly over Monument Hill, then Under Secretary Tuerk committed to bringing a national veterans cemetery to the southern Colorado region.

The cemetery is supported by national VSO's, local veteran's advocates and most importantly the veterans and their families living in Colorado.

With such overwhelming support by the Colorado delegation and Congress, the VA would be acting on the intent of Congress in establishing a cemetery in southern Colorado.

I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support our rural veterans and support this bill.

Mr. WALZ. I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 174.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1615

SUPPORTING AND ENCOURAGING GREATER SUPPORT FOR VETERANS DAY

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 89) supporting and encouraging greater support for Veterans Day each year.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 89

Whereas veterans of service in the United States Armed Forces have served the Nation with honor and at great personal sacrifice;

Whereas the American people owe the security of the Nation to those who have defended it;

Whereas on Veterans Day each year, the Nation honors those who have defended democracy by serving in the Armed Forces;

Whereas veterans continue to provide a valuable service in their communities across the Nation and are important members of American society;

Whereas we must honor and express our sincere gratitude to all our veterans for their unwavering commitment to country, justice and democracy;

Whereas the observance of Veterans Day is an expression of faith in democracy, faith in American values, and faith that those who fight for freedom will defeat those whose cause is unjust; and

Whereas section 6103(a) of title 5, United States Code, provides that "Veteran's Day, November 11" is a legal public holiday: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) encourages Americans to demonstrate their support for veterans on Veterans Day each year by treating that day as a special day of reflection;

(2) encourages schools and teachers to educate students on the great contributions veterans have made to the country and its history, both while serving as members of the United States Armed Forces and after completing their service; and

(3) requests that the President issue a proclamation each year in connection with the observance of Veterans Day calling on the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, each year on Veterans Day, Americans come together to honor our Nation's heroes, over 23 million veterans that have served our country. Again this year, our country is engaged in conflicts that require the dedication of our uniformed troops. Our Nation has a proud legacy of appreciation and commitment to the men and women who have worn the uniform in defense of this great land. We must be united in seeing that every soldier, sailor, airman and marine is welcomed back with all the care and compassion that this grateful Nation can bestow.

House Resolution 89 encourages Americans to demonstrate their support for veterans. No other group of Americans has stood stronger and braver for our democracy than our troops and veterans.

As a member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, it is my honor to serve the veterans of this Nation, and I encourage my fellow Americans to do the same. I firmly believe that Veterans Day should not be observed just once a year, but our Nation's heroes must be celebrated, honored and remembered every single day of the year.

I encourage all Americans to reach out to veterans, thank them and their families for the amazing sacrifices they make, learn more about their contributions to our country, and gain the wisdom of their personal stories.

On this 90th official Veterans Day, it is important to let these heroes know that this grateful Nation honors their service. Pause to remember that service and the sacrifices of each and every one who has worn this Nation's uniform. On Veterans Day and throughout the year, join me and every Member of this House to take the time and show your gratitude to those who have answered the call of duty.

Mr. Speaker, I know as a veteran myself, as a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee and having the honor to serve there, and as a teacher of our high school students, how incredibly important it is to remember the foundations this country was founded on and those who are willing to give and, as we speak, are still willing to give the ultimate sacrifice.

Veterans Day is not a day for sales, and Veterans Day is not a day to take the day off. Veterans Day is a day to understand that all the blessings of liberty and freedom this country has emanate from each and every one of those. So I think it is incredibly important. I urge support for this piece of legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 89, a resolution supporting and encouraging greater support for Veterans Day each year.

Our Nation's veterans have sacrificed so much for the freedoms that we enjoy on a daily basis. Our Nation has an obligation to ensure that those who have served, and especially those who were injured while serving, have the necessary benefits and services available to allow them to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

Today, a new generation of heroes returns home, too often draped in the Nation's flag. Their comrades in arms stand guard and honor their memories as they themselves become the living symbols of the cost of freedom. It is right that today, almost 1 week before our commemoration of Veterans Day, that we consider this resolution encouraging and supporting the observance of this important day for our Nation.

This resolution encourages Americans to demonstrate their support for veterans on Veterans Day each year by treating that day as a special day of reflection, encourages schools and teachers to educate students on the great contributions our veterans have made to our country, and requests that the President issue a proclamation each year in connection with the observance of Veterans Day.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, Mr. BACA of California, for introducing this legislation, as well as Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for moving the bill so quickly to the floor for consideration.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 89.

Mr. Speaker, having no further speakers, I just again want to say how

important this resolution is. Mr. WALZ said it so eloquently, especially coming from somebody like himself who did many years in the military and rose to a place of such prominence. We appreciate his service.

Again, this resolution basically just says that we need to slow down and do more to recognize the sacrifice of our veterans on this very, very important day. I think it is certainly very fitting.

With that, I urge all of my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 89.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Arkansas, my good friend, a tireless supporter of veterans, a true gentleman in this House, and someone who embodies what we are here for. There is far more that unites us than divides us, and nothing makes that clearer than Veterans Day. I think all of us know that when we come together in support of our veterans, it is all that is right in this country. We have our differences, we disagree on things, but nothing will ever shake that.

I want to thank Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for their outstanding commitment to this. Maybe some people are wondering why this is H. Res. 89 after all the big numbers. Mr. BACA puts this in first every year in every Congress to make sure that it is ready to go for Veterans Day. For that I thank him.

ANDRÉ CARSON was down here earlier. As I explained to Mr. STEARNS why we did this, one of the things was, it is never hard to get anyone to come and support pieces of veterans legislation. Mr. CARSON from Indiana came back early and did that.

I also want to thank the staff for this package of initiatives going forward before Veterans Day, both the majority and the minority staff, for their tireless work on this. The one thing I have found working in the Veterans' Affairs Committee, the staff are there for our veterans. That is their main purpose, that is what they are there for every day, and they continue to work tirelessly to ensure that we are doing good things.

So it is with that that I ask all Americans to stand proud with our veterans, stand tall, know that those freedoms that they enjoy so much come at an incredible cost to many of our fellow Americans, but to let them know that we are with them every step of the way, and these pieces of legislation will go further to do that.

I urge the unanimous support of H. Res. 89.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 89, the Veterans Day resolution.

I thank Chairman BOB FILNER and Ranking Member STEVE BUYER for their commitment to this resolution and tremendous support for America's veterans.

As one of many veterans who are now Members of Congress, I am proud to introduce and now seek the passage of this important resolution.

To all my colleagues and fellow veterans, I commend you for your service.

This resolution reminds us that Veterans Day is not just a day off from school or work. This is a special day of reflection to honor those that have defended our freedom.

America would not be the great country that she is, if it were not for our veterans.

When our troops commit to serve our country, they make a promise to serve and protect.

We also have a moral responsibility to protect returning veterans and their families.

Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan must receive the best treatment. Sadly, for the last few years, I don't believe our Government has held its end of the bargain.

But Congress is working diligently to correct this, most recently by implementing an outstanding GI bill and for adding more support services to veterans and their families.

We all must do our part to recognize America's greatest heroes.

This is why my resolution also encourages schools to educate our young people about the contributions of our veterans to this country.

Last Congress, as Chair of the CHC, I worked closely with Hispanic veterans and Medal of Honor winners from WWII to today.

The stories of courage and sacrifice I heard from them were nothing short of amazing. They deserve to be recognized and thanked.

A special thanks is due to our military families who are often left behind and face the daily rigors of war within their homes in America and overseas.

These families sacrifice so much for their loved ones and for America. I thank you as well; you are the support system and backbone for all these veterans.

On November 11th, on Veterans Day do not forget who the true heroes of this country are. Reflect on the true meaning of Veterans Day, and remember the sacrifices made by so many proud American sons and daughters.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H. Res. 89.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 89, "supporting and encouraging greater support for Veterans Day each year." The roots of Veterans Day can be traced back to the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, in 1919, yet the reigning effects of the efforts of our Veterans reach back much further. From our inception as a Nation, freedom

has never been free; it has been fought for both on battle fields around the world and on the floors of the Congress.

In November 1919, President Wilson remembered our fallen soldiers of WWI with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations . . ." The Veterans Day that we know today was signed into law on May 26, 1954 by President Dwight Eisenhower. Congress amended the act on November 8, 1954, replacing "Armistice" with Veterans, and it has been known as Veterans Day since.

In its history, America has endured great tests of faith and each of the roughly 42 million men and women who have served this Nation at some point in time is a testament to the fact that this country truly is the land of the free and the home of the brave. For nowhere else in the world can you live a life of liberty in the pursuit of happiness as you can on American soil, this is the American Dream. A dream had by the likes of Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., Barbara Jordan and every other American. A dream recently achieved by President Obama, who came from obscurity to the forefront of a truly just nation. Veterans have all done a great service to this Nation and it is our duty to honor them. The Texas Veterans Commission recognizes over 1.7 million veterans in my home state of Texas and within my home district, the 18th District of Texas, we hold our 34,000 veterans in the upmost respect.

Every morning when you wake up, you should thank a Veteran. Every night you make it to bed, you should thank a Veteran. Every breath in freedom you take, you should thank a Veteran. After serving our Nation with honor, our Veterans deserve to be honored.

For these reasons I stand with many of my colleagues in strong support of H. Res. 89, authored by Congressman JOE BACA (CA 43rd District) for the greater recognition of Veterans Day by:

1. Encouraging Americans to demonstrate their support for veterans each year by treating that day as a special day of reflection;

2. Encouraging schools and teachers to educate our children about the many contributions that veterans have made to our society—both during and after their service in the military;

3. Requesting that the President issue a proclamation each year in connection with the observance of Veterans Day calling on the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

As stated in the resolution, the observance of Veterans Day is an expression of faith in democracy, faith in American values, and faith that those who fight for freedom will defeat those whose cause is unjust. As our Veterans take an oath to take on a just cause, so must we. We must vow to never forget the indisputable fact that our Veterans are the backbone of this Nation, they are the reason we can stand against forces of oppression. We too must stand and fight for our Veterans, to give them the care they both need and deserve.

Mr. WALZ. I have no further requests for time. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 89.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 780) recognizing the celebration of Filipino American History Month in October.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 780

Whereas the earliest documented proof of Filipino presence in the continental United States was the date of October 18, 1587, when the first "Luzones Indios" set foot in Morro Bay, California, on board the Manila-built galleon ship Nuestra Senora de Esperanza;

Whereas the Filipino American National Historical Society recognizes the year of 1763 as the date of the first permanent Filipino settlement in the United States in St. Malo Parrish, Louisiana, which set in motion the focus on the story of our Nation's past from a new perspective by concentrating on the economic, cultural, social, and other notable contributions that Filipino Americans have made in countless ways toward the development of the history of the United States;

Whereas the Filipino American community is the second largest Asian American group in the United States with a population of approximately 3,100,000 people;

Whereas Filipino American servicemen and servicewomen have a longstanding history serving within the Armed Services of the United States, from the Civil War to the present Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, including the 250,000 Filipinos who fought under the United States flag during World War II to protect and defend this country;

Whereas Filipino Americans are an integral part of the United States healthcare system as nurses, doctors, and other medical professionals;

Whereas Filipino Americans have contributed greatly to the fine arts, music, dance, literature, education, business, literature, journalism, sports, fashion, politics, government, science, technology, and other fields in the United States which enrich the landscape of the country;

Whereas efforts must continue to promote the study of Filipino American history and culture, as mandated in the mission statement of the Filipino American National Historical Society, because the roles of Filipino Americans and other people of color have been overlooked in the writing, teaching, and learning of United States history;

Whereas it is imperative for Filipino American youth to have positive role models to instill in them the importance of education, complemented with the richness of their ethnicity and the value of their legacy; and

Whereas Filipino American History Month is celebrated during the month of October: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the celebration of Filipino American History Month as a study of the advancement of Filipino Americans, as a time of reflection and remembrance, and as a time to renew efforts toward the research and examination of history and culture in order to provide an opportunity for all people in the United States to learn and appreciate more about Filipino Americans and their historic contributions to the Nation; and

(2) urges the people of the United States to observe Filipino American History Month with appropriate programs and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am proud to present H. Res. 780 for consideration. This resolution recognizes the celebration of Filipino American History Month.

House Resolution 780 was introduced on September 25, 2009, by my friend and colleague Representative BOB FILNER of California. In addition, this resolution was favorably reported out of the Oversight Committee by unanimous consent on October 29, 2009, and it enjoys the support of over 50 Members of Congress. Moreover, the United States Senate passed a companion resolution to this legislation, Senate Resolution 298, by unanimous consent on October 1, 2009.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 780 recognizes the celebration of Filipino American History Month as a unique opportunity to reflect upon the significant advancements of Filipino Americans in our country as well as highlight the countless and diverse contributions of Filipino Americans to our national history and culture.

This monthlong celebration of Filipino American History Month was established in 1988 by the Filipino American National Historical Society to coincide with the 225th anniversary of the permanent settlement of Filipinos in the continental United States.

Notably, the Filipino American National Historical Society recognizes the year 1763 as the date of the first permanent Filipino settlement in the continental United States in the small fishing village of Saint Malo, located in what is now Saint Bernard Parish in Louisiana. These early settlers were

formerly impressed sailors who escaped their oppressive conditions aboard Spanish galleons to establish a Filipino community in present-day Louisiana. The existence of this Filipino settlement was first reported in an 1883 Harper's Weekly article, which is widely believed to be the first article written about Filipino settlers in these United States.

Today, according to the most recent United States Census Bureau estimate, the Filipino American population in the United States is nearly 3.1 million, making the Filipino American community the second largest Asian American group in the United States. And while the majority of our Filipino American population is concentrated in the States of California and Hawaii, Filipino contributions in the field of public service, literature, business, science and other areas have deeply enriched the lives of all Americans across our Nation.

Whether we recall the approximately 250,000 brave Filipino Americans that served during World War II, or our Filipino Americans deployed in the support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, our brave Filipino American servicemen and -women have continually demonstrated their commitment to safeguarding our Nation at great personal sacrifice.

Accordingly, I would like to thank the sponsor of this resolution, my friend and colleague Mr. FILNER of California, for his great work as chairman of our Veterans' Affairs Committee and for ensuring that the economic stimulus legislation signed by President Obama earlier this year included a provision which required that our roughly 15,000 living Filipino veterans of World War II receive their full and deserved veterans benefits.

The contributions of Filipino Americans to our national history are also evident in various other areas, including government and journalism. Notably, in 1994, Benjamin J. Cayetano became the first Filipino American elected a United States Governor. And in 1997, Filipino American journalists Byron Acohido and Alex Tizon of The Seattle Times were the recipients of Pulitzer Prizes for their outstanding contributions to American journalism.

Mr. Tizon, a native of Manila who came to the United States at the age of 4, was honored for a series of investigative articles about the widespread corruption and inequities in the Federally sponsored housing program for Native Americans. Mr. Acohido received his Pulitzer for his reporting on the conditions of the American aerospace industry.

Mr. Speaker, these are only a few of the many Filipino Americans whose achievements have greatly contributed to our national history. It is my hope that we can commemorate the contributions of all Filipino Americans

through the passage of House Resolution 780 and by recognizing the significance of Filipino American History Month.

I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting H. Res. 780.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

□ 1630

I rise today in support of this legislation and the two other commemorating resolutions the Oversight and Government Reform Committee has put forth for consideration today on the House floor.

I believe Congress should instead, though, be focusing on high-priority initiatives. We are facing record unemployment deficits that threaten to bankrupt this country and a stimulus that is failing to create new jobs, yet this Congress is considering legislation that is not a high priority for the American people. The Congress should be considering legislation that provides a real and immediate economic solution for the American people before naming and commemorating resolutions.

But I do rise today, Mr. Speaker, in support of this resolution in celebration of Filipino American History Month. We have all seen the countless ways in which these Filipino Americans have advanced our Nation politically, economically and culturally. Filipino Americans have significantly contributed to this country through arts, science, math, sports, commerce and every other aspect of American culture since they first arrived in the 16th century.

During World War II, over 200,000 Filipinos served in our U.S. military. They served in a variety of roles, such as the Philippine Scouts, the Philippine Commonwealth Army under U.S. command and as guerrillas during the Japanese occupation of their islands. The history of our country has shown that Filipino Americans have strengthened the United States in all facets of our growth and development. Over 3 million Americans have traced their lineage to the Philippines, making them the second-largest Asian American group in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. But I do want to point out that the reason we are here, dealing with noncontroversial items and commemorative items, in fact, is because the House is not scheduled to take up votes, according to the calendar, until 6:30. So we use this time to take up matters that are noncontroversial, and we postpone votes so that Members can come in during the day. They are flying in during the process.

So this is a regularly scheduled event here. This is when we take up matters that are noncontroversial, such as this one, which recognizes the importance

of Filipino Americans. This is important to the Filipino American community. It is very, very important and well deserved. I think it is appropriate at a time like this to take the time to recognize their accomplishments and for being an important part of our Nation's history and our culture.

I resent the fact that the inference has been made here that somehow we are using valuable time in the House when this particular time has been segmented so as to not interrupt the important business to be taken up later in the week. We are taking this time now, while Members are flying in and we don't have a full quorum, to address these commemorative issues. We will be in for the full week, so we'll have plenty of time to take those other matters up when the House is fully assembled.

Again, I have no further speakers, but I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCHENRY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would say in response to my colleague, I certainly appreciate the substance of this resolution. It is important. However, my colleague's characterization that this is only one day that we do suspensions here in the House actually doesn't comport with the reality that we've faced over the last few weeks in the House of Representatives.

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of last week, the House of Representatives considered suspension items, which are noncontroversial pieces of legislation, many of which are commemorating in nature and are certainly important to the Members and to the group they're commemorating, absolutely. I agree. But we do have major work that we must contend with, and that was certainly the reason why I started this discussion by saying that we should be dealing with real major economic issues as a Congress and take those very seriously and, adding further, that the stimulus has failed our people, and I think we should be working to fix that, rather than simply to commemorate or change the building names of different Federal agencies and different governmental buildings.

I certainly appreciate my colleague's comments, but we certainly have a different focus on that matter and that characterization, although I would say that I share the same focus as my colleague from Massachusetts, and that is trying to do what's right for the American people. I certainly appreciate his work in that regard as well.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, the point I was making is that this time, this time right now, has been reserved for this purpose specifically; and this is a regular occasion during the week that we do this. Again, while we have extended a courtesy to Members of the Republican side, from the minority, so that they would know when votes are ex-

pected on the floor, and we have put that to a time certain.

The reason that we are dealing with ceremonial matters, commemorative matters here, is because Members are not all in the District of Columbia right now; they're not all in Washington. They are traveling here. This is a matter of courtesy, a courtesy extended to the minority Members so that when matters of contest and of dispute might arise, they would be here in full numbers, having the full opportunity to debate those matters.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 780, which I introduced along with several of my colleagues on the U.S.-Philippines Friendship Caucus.

H. Res. 780 recognizes Filipino American History Month, which was in October, and celebrates the heritage and culture of Filipino Americans and their immense contributions to our nation.

The Filipino American National Historical Society established Filipino American History Month in 1988. However, the U.S. House of Representatives has never recognized Filipino American History Month.

Consideration of H. Res. 780 is long overdue.

I am pleased to honor the Filipino American community and pay tribute to the extraordinary contributions that Filipinos make to this nation. Filipino Americans have been part of the American experience, confronting many difficult challenges while being resolute and steadfast in their cultural heritage.

Today, we honor Filipino Americans, from farm workers to nurses and doctors to the brave and courageous soldiers who fought shoulder-to-shoulder with American servicemen. This country is indebted to the Filipino veterans of World War II for their extraordinary sacrifices.

I urge my colleagues to join with me in honoring the history, culture, and contribution of Filipino Americans in the United States by supporting this important resolution.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I extend my strong support to H. Res. 780, which recognizes and celebrates Filipino American History Month in October.

The first Filipino in the United States arrived at Morro Bay, California, on October 18, 1587 in the Manila-built galleon, Nuestra Señora de Esperanza. In 1763, the first permanent Filipino settlement was established in the United States in St. Malo Parrish, Louisiana. For over 200 years, since before the founding of our great country, Filipino Americans have made varied contributions to American culture and society in countless ways.

Today, there are more than 3 million Filipino Americans and persons of Filipino ancestry living in the United States, including nearly 6,000 in my own 9th Congressional district in Houston, Texas. Filipino Americans count among their community prominent politicians, artists, businessmen, athletes, scientists, educators, writers, television personalities, scholars, and entertainers. Moreover, they are people who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for the safety of our country. Filipino American servicemen and servicewomen have a longstanding history of serving in the Armed Services of the United States, from the Civil War to the present Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, including more than 250,000 Filipinos who valiantly

fought under the United States flag during World War II.

Notwithstanding their contributions to America, we must continue to promote the study of Filipino American history and culture because of the important roles that Filipino Americans and other people of color have played in United States history. It is my hope that through this House Resolution, we can renew our commitment to ensuring that Filipino Americans and people of color are given their due recognition for their contributions to our nation.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 780 to honor our nation's Filipino Americans and our shared history with this community in the United States. Filipino Americans have altered America, their contributions are documented and forever enshrined in our history, and they deserve our recognition for the countless ways in which they make America great.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 780, legislation introduced by my colleague, Congressman BOB FILNER of California. H. Res. 780 recognizes the celebration of Filipino-American History Month and the important contributions made by the Filipino-American community throughout our Nation's history. Filipino-Americans have contributed to all facets of American society and have enriched our Nation with their lives and achievements.

Guam is home to a large population of Filipino-Americans who are active in all sectors of our community. Filipino-Americans have contributed to the economic, cultural and social success of Guam and have long played a part in the development of our island. The Philippines are culturally and historically linked to our community on Guam.

I would like to recognize the Filipino Community of Guam, an umbrella organization representing over fifty groups, working together for the benefit of our island. I also commend the Filipino Community of Guam for mobilizing and organizing relief efforts for the Filipino flood victims affected by this past year's natural disasters. Numerous members of the Guam Filipino community maintain close ties to their relatives in the Philippines and were eager to help those in need.

As a member of the U.S.-Philippines Friendship Caucus and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus I join my colleagues in urging a "yes" vote on H. Res. 780.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 780.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE SENATE

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 159) honoring the New Hampshire State Senate for becoming the 1st statewide legislative body with

a majority of women in the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 159

Whereas for over 200 years the citizens of the State of New Hampshire have elected State senators to serve in the legislature;

Whereas from 1931 to 1933, E. Maude Ferguson served as the first female member of the New Hampshire State Senate;

Whereas Vesta Roy served as the first female State senate president, and in 1983 she became the first female Governor of the State of New Hampshire;

Whereas women currently hold the offices of both the Speaker of the New Hampshire House of Representatives and the State Senate President of New Hampshire;

Whereas the New Hampshire State Senate was comprised of 13 women and 11 men for the legislative session beginning on December 3, 2008; and

Whereas the New Hampshire State Senate had nine women chairing committees and five men chairing committees for the legislative session beginning on December 3, 2008: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives honors the New Hampshire State Senate for becoming the 1st statewide legislative body with a majority of women in the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

On behalf of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to present House Resolution 159 for consideration. This resolution pays tribute to the New Hampshire State Senate for becoming the first statewide legislative body in United States history with a majority of women members.

House Resolution 159 was introduced on February 11, 2009, by my friend and fellow New Englander, Representative PAUL HODES of New Hampshire. In addition, this resolution was favorably reported out of the Oversight Committee by unanimous consent on October 29, 2009, and enjoys the support of nearly 60 Members of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 159 honors the New Hampshire State Senate for the remarkable distinction of becoming the first statewide legislative body to consist of a majority of women members. According to 2008 Census Bureau estimates, women com-

prise roughly 50.7 percent of the American population, yet despite the extent of their representation in the U.S. population, women remain significantly underrepresented at local, State and Federal Government levels. Notably, out of the 435 Members of the House of Representatives, women hold 77 congressional seats. Moreover, in the United States Senate, women hold 17 of the Senate's 100 seats.

In light of these and similar statistics evidencing the underrepresentation of women in government, the advancement of female legislators in the New Hampshire State Senate can be characterized as a defining moment in our Nation's history.

Following the State legislature elections of November 2008, the State of New Hampshire began its current legislative session on December 3, 2008, with a historic female majority in the State Senate. Specifically, women legislators currently hold 13 of New Hampshire's 24 State Senate seats. In addition, nine female Senators are currently serving as Chairs in the State Senate, which consists of 14 standing committees. Moreover, the Honorable Sylvia Larsen is currently serving her second consecutive term as State Senate president with the Honorable Terie Norelli also serving her second consecutive term as Speaker of the New Hampshire House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize that this watershed moment in American history would not have been possible without the efforts of previous female leaders in New Hampshire politics, including the Honorable E. Maude Ferguson and the Honorable Vesta Roy. Senator Ferguson, who served in the New Hampshire State House from 1931 to 1933, has the distinction of becoming the first woman elected to the New Hampshire State Senate. Ms. Roy made history as the first woman elected to serve as president of the New Hampshire State Senate as well as the first woman to serve as the Governor of New Hampshire from 1982 to 1983.

Mr. Speaker, the remarkable achievements of these women legislators are as inspirational as they are historic, to all those Americans that are committed to the equality of all citizens regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or gender.

Let us as a body take this opportunity to honor the great State of New Hampshire and its State Senate for this fine achievement by passing House Resolution 159. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As I said in the previous resolution that I was managing here on the floor, while I am supportive of this legislation, the previous commemorating resolution and the additional one that the Oversight and Government Reform Committee is offering here for consideration today, I believe that Congress should be, instead, focusing on higher-priority initiatives. We're facing record

unemployment, deficits that threaten to bankrupt the country, and a stimulus that is failing to create new jobs. Congress should be considering legislation providing real and immediate economic solutions for the American people before naming and commemorating anything.

But having said that, I do think it is important to recognize the State of New Hampshire for their major milestone, and I rise in support of H. Res. 159, honoring the New Hampshire State Senate for becoming the first statewide legislative body with a majority of women in the United States. It is a significant achievement. As a result of the 2008 statewide elections, 13 of 24 seats in the Senate are now held by women, an increase of three members which resulted in their majority status. On the national level, less than one in four legislators is female and eight of 50 Governors is a woman. These numbers continue to grow with each election year throughout the country.

I'm pleased to salute the women of New Hampshire for their commitment to public service as well as women throughout the United States who choose to serve our citizens on the local, State and Federal levels as their elected representatives. We certainly commend the wonderful work and addition that New Hampshire has been able to meet by this wonderful milestone.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I will just point out that last week, we actually finally had an official draft of the health care reform bill. My colleagues on the other side have insisted, rightly, that they have 72 hours to review that bill; that it be placed online. I think it is a courtesy to keep controversial issues off the floor today to allow Members to consider that legislation because it is so important. I think if we jammed the schedule today with controversial matters, you might hear the complaint from my colleagues and others that they weren't given a full and fair opportunity to read that health care reform bill.

So, you're darned if you do sometimes, and you're darned if you don't. But I certainly do want to join with the lead sponsor and my colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina, but especially PAUL HODES from New Hampshire, who is the lead sponsor of this resolution, in congratulating the New Hampshire State Senate. I happen to be a member of the New Hampshire bar, so this is particularly a proud moment for me as well in celebrating their terrific accomplishment through the passage of House Resolution 159.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 159, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 736) honoring President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address on "Dedication Day", November 19, 2009.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 736

Whereas, on November 19, 1863, Abraham Lincoln dedicated the Soldiers' National Cemetery on the battlefield at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with the Gettysburg Address, which harkened back to the promises of the Declaration of Independence in the first sentence, "Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal", and which called upon people of the United States to dedicate themselves to the principles of democracy so that government "of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth";

Whereas Congress adopted a joint resolution on August 7, 1946, declaring the Gettysburg Address to be "the outstanding classic of the ages", designating November 19 as "Dedication Day" in honor of the Gettysburg Address, and suggesting that the Gettysburg Address "be read on that day in public assemblages throughout the United States and its possessions, on our ships at sea, and wherever the American flag flies"; and

Whereas 2009 is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln and bicentennial tributes to his birth are expected throughout the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors President Lincoln's greatest speech, the Gettysburg Address; and

(2) encourages people in the United States to read the Gettysburg Address on "Dedication Day" in public places across the Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

On behalf of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am proud to present House Resolution 736 for consideration. This resolution pays tribute to the historic Gettysburg Ad-

dress delivered by President Abraham Lincoln in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on November 19, 1863.

□ 1645

House Resolution 736 was introduced on September 10, 2009, by my great friend and colleague, Representative TODD PLATTS, Republican of the 19th District of Pennsylvania. In addition, this resolution was favorably reported out of the Oversight Committee by unanimous consent on October 29, 2009, and enjoys the support of over 50 Members of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 736 honors one of the most remarkable and significant political contributions in terms of speeches made by one of our greatest Presidents, the Gettysburg Address delivered by President Abraham Lincoln at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on Thursday, November 19, 1863. This resolution is not only fitting but also timely, as earlier this year we celebrated the bicentennial anniversary of the birth of President Lincoln, and on November 19 we will mark the 146th anniversary of Dedication Day and the Gettysburg Address.

In his invitation letter to President Lincoln, dated November 2, 1863, Gettysburg attorney David Wills requested that President Lincoln participate in the dedication ceremony by delivering "a few appropriate remarks," as Wills noted that former Senator Edward Everett of Massachusetts was already scheduled to deliver the central oration. Accordingly, the dedication address delivered by President Lincoln more than 4 months following the pivotal battle of Gettysburg is not remembered for its length, but rather for the depth of its content.

In less than 3 minutes and in only 10 sentences, President Lincoln eloquently commemorated the lives of those who had fallen on the hallowed battlefield, reaffirmed the founding principles of the then-divided United States of America, and set forth the impetus behind the continuation of the shared struggle to unify the Nation amidst a deadly Civil War.

As noted by President Lincoln at the conclusion his historic address: "It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus so far nobly advanced . . . that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this Nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from this Earth."

The elegance of President Lincoln's brief words was noted by Senator Everett, whose oration at Gettysburg preceded the President's address and lasted approximately 2 hours. In a letter that he sent to President Lincoln following the dedication ceremony, Senator Everett wrote: "I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I

came as near to the central idea of the occasion in 2 hours as you did in 2 minutes."

And the profound impact of President Lincoln's address on our national history has been evident for generations. In addition to its prominence on the south wall of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., the Gettysburg Address has served as a timeless source of inspiration in our eternal commitment as a Nation to achieve equality among all citizens. Notably, President Lincoln's address was referenced in the equally historic "I Have a Dream" speech delivered by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in August of 1963.

Mr. Speaker, in acknowledgement of the lasting impact of President Lincoln's words, the 79th Congress approved House Joint Resolution 35 on August 7, 1946, thereby designating the day of November 19 as Dedication Day. The 79th Congress additionally characterized the Gettysburg Address as "the outstanding classic of the ages" and recognized that "it will touch the hearts of men and inspire faith in our matchless democracy as long as time endures."

Mr. Speaker, let us pay further tribute to President Lincoln in the year of his bicentennial birthday celebration and in anticipation of the 146th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address through our support of Representative TODD PLATTS of Pennsylvania's resolution, 736.

I would like to thank my colleague Mr. PLATTS for introducing this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as I said in the two previous resolutions that have come forth from the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, while I do support the legislation at hand and the motivation behind it, I do think that Congress should be focusing instead on higher-priority initiatives.

We're facing record unemployment, deficits that threaten to bankrupt the country, and a stimulus that is failing to help our people and create new jobs. Congress should be considering legislation providing real and immediate economic solutions for the American people before naming and commemorating resolutions.

I certainly appreciate the initiative of my colleagues to acknowledge the Gettysburg Address and the anniversary that we are fast approaching. I do find it quite interesting as a Congressman from a Southern State that my colleague that controls the majority's time is from a Northern State. It's kind of interesting that actually those dynamics still persist of both Southerners and Yankees alike, or New Englanders. But we can have an honest debate in this country, which is certainly worthwhile, and I think that

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address certainly is a wonderful and enormous milestone for all Americans. Whether or not your State was in the Union at that point, whether it even existed at that point, it's certainly important.

On November 19, 1863, President Lincoln delivered a carefully crafted address that was assumed by many to be overshadowed by Senator Edward Everett's 2-hour oration. So unsuspecting was the crowd and so swift was the speech that no pictures were taken while the address was given. If the crowd had known that they were witnessing the defining speech of the War Between the States, I'm confident that many more would have been better prepared for the occasion.

In 10 lines and 272 words, the President redefined the war as an effort to solidify the American political system, our Republic, calling upon the Nation to dedicate themselves to a new birth of freedom so that government "of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the Earth."

We all know these words, Mr. Speaker. We all care about these words. Though brief, his oration was powerful. In these few appropriate remarks, Lincoln honored the fallen but also paid homage to the Founding Fathers and their commitment to a Nation led by its people.

Mr. Speaker, I would say in closing on a larger issue for the American people that this commemorating resolution, while certainly it's important to honor the Gettysburg Address, and though delivered in 1863, I think today we are at an anniversary of the 146th year for the Gettysburg Address, and it's important that we remember and commemorate this; but I think it's also important that we have a real debate about health care.

I do appreciate my colleague saying earlier that we're going to have a debate. We have 72 hours to review the 1,990-page health care bill, which is good, and certainly we're grateful, as a minority party, to have that time to review such a massive piece of legislation.

But I also think it's important that we have significant debate on this legislation. And rather than having just 2 or 3 hours, which has been the news this week that we will have to debate such a far-reaching piece of legislation on this House floor, that we would be able to spend more time, even on a Monday, debating health care and the importance of getting this approach right for the American people not just for today but for tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that the current resolution is offered by my dear friend and colleague who happens to be a Republican; so if I did not extend him the courtesy, Mr. PLATTS of Pennsylvania, to offer this resolution, I think it would not comport to the level of courtesy that this House requires.

I do want to point out that of the last seven resolutions that we have taken up in the House today, five out of the seven were offered by Republican Members: Senate 475 by Senator BURR, House Resolution 773 by Representative BOOZMAN, again 1168 by Representative BOOZMAN. Those are all dealing with veterans' issues. Representative CAO of Veterans' Affairs, House Resolution 828; and H. Res. 398 by Representative FORTENBERRY, another one of my great Republican friends.

So if the gentleman wanted to complain and restrain his own Members from offering what I think are meritorious and deserving resolutions with respect to veterans and to the people of their own districts, that's a courtesy that I fully and fairly recognize and choose to honor, but if the gentleman wants to press with his desire to curtail—

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LYNCH. The gentleman has already exhausted his time to no apparent purpose. It would be an attack on common sense for me to yield to him at this time.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members to support Mr. PLATTS of Pennsylvania in his resolution, my Republican friend.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 736 "Honoring President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address on Dedication Day."

Mr. Speaker, this resolution recognizes President Lincoln's speech during the November 19, 1863 dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery on the battlefield at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

This speech, forever known as the Gettysburg Address, commemorated the sacrifices of the fallen during the Civil War, and called upon people of the United States to dedicate themselves to the principles of democracy so that "government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth." Lincoln's words transcend the context of the Civil War and have served as an inspiration for visitors to the Lincoln Memorial, including the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., who chose the Memorial steps as the location to deliver his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. King started his speech by invoking Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and reminding those gathered before him of the importance of the Emancipation Proclamation.

King's words remind us of the importance of President Lincoln, as well as how his legacy cannot be embodied by any one speech or action. This resolution is particularly timely given that, this year we celebrate the 200th anniversary of President Lincoln's birth. President Lincoln was a true champion of liberty for all Americans, and he led the nation during very turbulent political times from the Civil War. Abraham Lincoln was portrayed as a self-made man, the liberator of the slaves, and the savior of the Union who had given his life so that others could be free. President Lincoln became Father Abraham, a near mythological hero, "lawgiver" to African Americans, and a "Masterpiece of God" sent to save the Union. His humor was presented as an example of his humanity; his numerous pardons demonstrated his "great soul"; and his sorrowful

demeanor reflected the burdens of his lonely journey as the leader of a “blundering and sinful” people.

Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809, to Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, two uneducated farmers, in a one-room log cabin on the 348-acre Sinking Spring Farm, in southeast Hardin County, Kentucky. Lincoln began his political career in 1832, at age 23, with an unsuccessful campaign for the Illinois General Assembly, as a member of the Whig Party.

Lincoln was a true opponent of injustice. In 1837, he made his first protest against slavery in the Illinois House, stating that the institution was “founded on both injustice and bad policy.”

Opposed to the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act, Lincoln spoke to a crowd in Peoria, Illinois, on October 16, 1854, outlining the moral, political and economic arguments against slavery that he would continue to uphold throughout his career.

His “Western” origins also appealed to the newer states: other contenders, especially those with more governmental experience, had acquired enemies within the party and were weak in the critical western states, while Lincoln was perceived as a moderate who could win the West.

On November 6, 1860, Lincoln was elected as the 16th President of the United States. In his First Inaugural Address, Lincoln declared, “I hold that in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments,” arguing further that the purpose of the United States Constitution was “to form a more perfect union.”

Lincoln possessed a keen understanding of strategic points and understood the importance of defeating the enemy’s army, rather than simply capturing cities. He had, however, limited success in motivating his commanders to adopt his strategies until late 1863, when he found a man who shared his vision of the war in Ulysses S. Grant. Only then could he insist on using African American troops and relentlessly pursue a series of coordinated offensives in multiple theaters.

Throughout the war, Lincoln showed a keen curiosity with the military campaigns. He spent hours at the War Department telegraph office, reading dispatches from his generals. He visited battle sites frequently, and seemed fascinated by scenes of war.

The Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves in territories not already under Union control. Lincoln later said: “I never, in my life, felt more certain that I was doing right, than I do in signing this paper.”

As the war was drawing to a close, Lincoln became the first American president to be assassinated. On April 14, 1865, as a lone bodyguard wandered, and Lincoln sat in his state box, John Wilkes Booth crept up behind the President and fired a single fatal shot into the President. However, his triumphs live on far past this date.

In 1982, forty-nine historians and political scientists were asked by the Chicago Tribune to rate all the Presidents through Jimmy Carter in five categories: leadership qualities, accomplishments/crisis management, political skills, appointments, and character/integrity. At the top of the list stood Abraham Lincoln. The judgment of historians and the public tells us that Abraham Lincoln was the nation’s greatest President by every measure applied.

Because he was committed to preserving the Union and thus vindicating democracy no matter what the consequences to himself, the Union was indeed saved. Because he understood that ending slavery required patience, careful timing, shrewd calculations, and an iron resolve, slavery was indeed killed. Lincoln managed in the process of saving the Union and killing slavery to define the creation of a more perfect Union in terms of liberty and economic equality that rallied the citizenry behind him. Because he understood that victory in both great causes depended upon purposeful and visionary presidential leadership as well as the exercise of politically acceptable means, he left as his legacy a United States that was both whole and free. His great achievement, historians tell us, was his ability to energize and mobilize the nation by appealing to its best ideals while acting “with malice towards none” in the pursuit of a more perfect, more just, and more enduring Union.

Mr. Speaker, President Lincoln has paved the way for people of color such as me to serve in Congress and represent the people of the 18th District of Texas proudly. He has been a trailblazer, opening the door for our first African American President, President Barack Obama.

This year, we celebrate the life of President Abraham Lincoln. He has given America many victories. Importantly, his presidency opened the door to ensure that all Americans would be assured their constitutional freedoms and that all Americans would enjoy the triumph against oppression and injustice. President Lincoln has lit the candle, let us today continue to carry it and make sure that it will never go out.

One hundred and forty six years after the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln’s words continue to inspire people and governments not only in America, but throughout the world. In 1958, France adopted the constitution of its’ fifth—and current—republic. Under Title 1, Section 2, the constitution states that “the principle of the Republic shall be: government of the people, by the people and for the people.” This is one of many examples of other nations viewing our great country as a beacon of democracy.

I thank my colleague, Rep. TODD PLATTS, of Pennsylvania, for introducing this important legislation, to ensure that we celebrate, treasure and recognize the impact of President Abraham Lincoln’s most famous speech and I urge my colleagues to honor President Lincoln not only by joining me in supporting this resolution, but also by promoting the reading and examining of this speech on November 19th.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 736.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the

Chair’s prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 4 o’clock and 58 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HEINRICH) at 6 o’clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 1168, by the yeas and nays;

House Resolution 291, by the yeas and nays;

Senate 509, by the yeas and nays.

Proceedings on remaining postponed questions will resume later in the week.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

VETERANS RETRAINING ACT OF 2009

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1168, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1168, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 356, nays 0, not voting 76, as follows:

[Roll No. 832]

YEAS—356

Aderholt	Baca	Bean
Adler (NJ)	Bachmann	Berkley
Akin	Bachus	Berman
Alexander	Baird	Berry
Altmire	Baldwin	Biggert
Andrews	Barrow	Bilbray
Arcuri	Bartlett	Bilirakis
Austria	Barton (TX)	Bishop (GA)

Bishop (NY)	Gohmert	McIntyre	Smith (TX)	Tonko	Welch	Calvert	Hodes	Napolitano
Bishop (UT)	Gonzalez	McKeon	Snyder	Towns	Westmoreland	Camp	Holt	Neugebauer
Blackburn	Goodlatte	McMahon	Space	Tsongas	Whitfield	Campbell	Honda	Nye
Blunt	Graves	McNerney	Speier	Turner	Wilson (OH)	Cantor	Hoyer	Oberstar
Bocieri	Grayson	Meek (FL)	Stearns	Upton	Wilson (SC)	Cao	Hunter	Obey
Boehner	Green, Al	Melancon	Sullivan	Van Hollen	Wittman	Capito	Inglis	Olson
Bono Mack	Green, Gene	Mica	Sutton	Visclosky	Wolf	Capps	Inslee	Oliver
Boozman	Griffith	Michaud	Tanner	Walden	Woolsey	Cardoza	Israel	Ortiz
Boswell	Guthrie	Miller (FL)	Terry	Walz	Wu	Carnahan	Issa	Pastor (AZ)
Boucher	Hall (TX)	Miller (MI)	Thompson (MS)	Wasserman	Yarmuth	Carson (IN)	Jackson (IL)	Paul
Boustany	Halvorson	Miller (NC)	Thompson (PA)	Schultz	Young (AK)	Carter	Jackson-Lee	Paulsen
Boyd	Hare	Miller, Gary	Thornberry	Watson	Young (FL)	Castle	(TX)	Pence
Braley (IA)	Harman	Miller, George	Tierney	Watt		Castor (FL)	Jenkins	Perlmutter
Bright	Harper	Minnick	Titus	Waxman		Chaffetz	Johnson (GA)	Perriello
Brown (SC)	Hastings (FL)	Mitchell				Chandler	Johnson, E. B.	Peters
Brown-Waite,	Heinrich	Mollohan				Childers	Johnson, Sam	Peterson
Ginny	Heller	Moore (KS)	Abercrombie	Grijalva	Payne	Chu	Jones	Petri
Buchanan	Hensarling	Moore (WI)	Ackerman	Gutierrez	Poe (TX)	Clay	Jordan (OH)	Pingree (ME)
Burgess	Herger	Moran (KS)	Barrett (SC)	Hall (NY)	Rush	Cleaver	Kagen	Pitts
Burton (IN)	Hereth Sandlin	Moran (VA)	Becerra	Hastings (WA)	Ryan (OH)	Clyburn	Kaptur	Platts
Butterfield	Higgins	Murphy (CT)	Blumenauer	Himes	Salazar	Coble	Kennedy	Polis (CO)
Buyer	Hill	Murphy (NY)	Bonner	Hinche	Sarbanes	Coffman (CO)	Kildee	Pomeroy
Calvert	Hinojosa	Murphy, Tim	Boren	Hoekstra	Schock	Cohen	Kilpatrick (MI)	Posey
Camp	Hirono	Murtha	Brady (PA)	Holden	Shimkus	Cole	Kilroy	Price (GA)
Campbell	Hodes	Myrick	Brady (TX)	Johnson (IL)	Shuster	Conaway	King (IA)	Price (NC)
Cantor	Holt	Nadler (NY)	Broun (GA)	Kind	Sires	Connolly (VA)	Kingston	Putnam
Cao	Honda	Napolitano	Brown, Corrine	King (NY)	Smith (WA)	Cooper	Kirk	Quigley
Capito	Hoyer	Neugebauer	Capuano	Lamborn	Souder	Costa	Kirkpatrick (AZ)	Radanovich
Capps	Hunter	Nye	Carney	Linder	Spratt	Costello	Kissell	Rahall
Cardoza	Inglis	Oberstar	Clarke	Lipinski	Stark	Courtney	Klein (FL)	Rehberg
Carnahan	Inslee	Obey	Conyers	Lucas	Stupak	Crowley	Kline (MN)	Reichert
Carson (IN)	Israel	Olson	Crenshaw	Maloney	Taylor	Cuellar	Kosmas	Reyes
Carter	Issa	Ortiz	Davis (AL)	McCaul	Teague	Culberson	Kratovil	Richardson
Cassidy	Jackson (IL)	Pastor (AZ)	Davis (IL)	McMorris	Thompson (CA)	Cummings	Kucinich	Rodriguez
Castle	Jackson-Lee	Paul	Davis (TN)	Rodgers	Tiahrt	Dahlkemper	Lance	Roe (TN)
Castor (FL)	(TX)	Paulsen	Deal (GA)	Meeks (NY)	Tiberi	Davis (CA)	Langevin	Rogers (AL)
Chaffetz	Jenkins	Pence	DeFazio	Murphy, Patrick	Velázquez	Davis (KY)	Larsen (WA)	Rogers (KY)
Chandler	Johnson (GA)	Perlmutter	Doyle	Neal (MA)	Wamp	DeGette	Larson (CT)	Rogers (MI)
Childers	Johnson, E. B.	Perriello	Gerlach	Nunes	Waters	Delahunt	Latham	Rohrabacher
Chu	Johnson, Sam	Peters	Gingrey (GA)	Olver	Weiner	DeLauro	LaTourette	Rooney
Cleaver	Jones	Peterson	Gordon (TN)	Pallone	Wexler	Dent	Latta	Ros-Lehtinen
Clyburn	Jordan (OH)	Petri	Granger	Pascrell		Diaz-Balart, L.	Lee (CA)	Roskam
Coble	Kagen	Pingree (ME)				Diaz-Balart, M.	Lee (NY)	Ross
Coffman (CO)	Kanjorski	Pitts				Dicks	Levin	Rothman (NJ)
Cohen	Kaptur	Platts				Dingell	Lewis (CA)	Roybal-Allard
Cole	Kennedy	Polis (CO)				Doggett	Lewis (GA)	Royce
Conaway	Kildee	Pomeroy				Donnelly (IN)	LoBiondo	Ruppersberger
Connolly (VA)	Kilpatrick (MI)	Posey				Dreier	Loeback	Ryan (WI)
Cooper	Kilroy	Price (GA)				Driehaus	Lofgren, Zoe	Sánchez, Linda
Costa	King (IA)	Price (NC)				Duncan	Lowey	T.
Costello	Kingston	Putnam				Edwards (MD)	Luetkemeyer	Sanchez, Loretta
Courtney	Kirk	Quigley				Edwards (TX)	Luján	Scalise
Crowley	Kirkpatrick (AZ)	Radanovich				Ehlers	Lummis	Schakowsky
Cuellar	Kissell	Rahall				Ellison	Lungren, Daniel	Schauer
Culberson	Klein (FL)	Rangel				Emerson	E.	Schiff
Cummings	Kline (MN)	Rehberg				Engel	Lynch	Schmidt
Dahlkemper	Kosmas	Reichert				Eshoo	Mack	Schrader
Davis (CA)	Kratovil	Reyes				Etheridge	Maffei	Schwartz
Davis (KY)	Kucinich	Richardson				Fallin	Manzullo	Scott (GA)
DeGette	Lance	Rodriguez				Farr	Marchant	Scott (VA)
Delahunt	Langevin	Roe (TN)				Fattah	Markey (CO)	Sensenbrenner
DeLauro	Larsen (WA)	Rogers (AL)				Filner	Markey (MA)	Serrano
Dent	Larson (CT)	Rogers (KY)				Flake	Marshall	Sessions
Diaz-Balart, L.	Latham	Rogers (MI)				Fleming	Massa	Sestak
Diaz-Balart, M.	LaTourette	Rohrabacher				Forbes	Matheson	Shadegg
Dicks	Latta	Rooney				Fortenberry	Matsui	Shea-Porter
Dingell	Lee (CA)	Ros-Lehtinen				Foster	McCarthy (CA)	Sherman
Doggett	Lee (NY)	Roskam				Fox	McCarthy (NY)	Shuler
Donnelly (IN)	Levin	Ross				Frank (MA)	McClintock	Simpson
Dreier	Lewis (CA)	Rothman (NJ)				Franks (AZ)	McCollum	Skelton
Driehaus	Lewis (GA)	Roybal-Allard				Frelinghuysen	McCotter	Slaughter
Duncan	LoBiondo	Royce				Fudge	McDermott	Smith (NE)
Edwards (MD)	Loeback	Ruppersberger				Gallegly	McGovern	Smith (NJ)
Edwards (TX)	Lofgren, Zoe	Ryan (WI)				Garrett (NJ)	McHenry	Smith (TX)
Ehlers	Lowey	Sánchez, Linda				Giffords	McIntyre	Snyder
Ellison	Luetkemeyer	T.				Gohmert	McKeon	Space
Ellsworth	Luján	Sanchez, Loretta				Gonzalez	McMahon	Speier
Emerson	Lummis	Scalise				Goodlatte	McNerney	Stearns
Engel	Lungren, Daniel	Schakowsky				Graves	Meek (FL)	Sullivan
Eshoo	E.	Schauer				Grayson	Melancon	Sutton
Etheridge	Lynch	Schiff				Green, Al	Mica	Tanner
Fallin	Mack	Schmidt				Green, Gene	Michaud	Terry
Farr	Maffei	Schrader				Griffith	Miller (FL)	Thompson (MS)
Fattah	Manzullo	Schwartz				Guthrie	Miller (MI)	Thompson (PA)
Filner	Marchant	Scott (GA)				Hall (TX)	Miller (NC)	Thornberry
Flake	Markey (CO)	Scott (VA)				Halvorson	Miller, Gary	Tierney
Fleming	Markey (MA)	Sensenbrenner				Hare	Miller, George	Titus
Forbes	Marshall	Serrano				Harman	Minnick	Tonko
Fortenberry	Massa	Sessions				Harper	Mitchell	Towns
Foster	Matheson	Sestak				Hastings (FL)	Mollohan	Tsongas
Fox	Matsui	Shadegg				Heinrich	Moore (KS)	Turner
Frank (MA)	McCarthy (CA)	Shea-Porter				Heller	Moore (WI)	Upton
Franks (AZ)	McCarthy (NY)	Sherman				Hensarling	Moran (KS)	Van Hollen
Frelinghuysen	McClintock	Shuler				Herger	Murphy (CT)	Visclosky
Fudge	McCollum	Simpson				Hereth Sandlin	Murphy (NY)	Walden
Gallegly	McCotter	Skelton				Higgins	Murphy, Tim	Walz
Garrett (NJ)	McDermott	Slaughter				Hill	Murtha	Wasserman
Giffords	McGovern	Smith (NE)				Hinojosa	Myrick	Schultz
	McHenry	Smith (NJ)				Hirono	Nadler (NY)	Watson

NOT VOTING—76

□ 1901

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF ASSISTANCE DOGS IN HELPING WOUNDED VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 291, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res 291.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 351, nays 0, not voting 81, as follows:

[Roll No. 833]

YEAS—351

Aderholt	Barton (TX)	Bono Mack
Adler (NJ)	Bean	Boozman
Akin	Berkley	Boswell
Alexander	Berman	Boucher
Altmire	Berry	Boustany
Andrews	Biggert	Boyd
Arcuri	Bilbray	Braley (IA)
Austria	Bilirakis	Bright
Baca	Bishop (GA)	Brown (SC)
Bachmann	Bishop (NY)	Brown-Waite,
Bachus	Bishop (UT)	Ginny
Baird	Blackburn	Burgess
Baldwin	Blunt	Burton (IN)
Barrow	Bocieri	Butterfield
Bartlett	Boehner	Buyer

Watt
Waxman
Welch
Westmoreland
Whitfield

Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Woolsey

Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—81

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Barrett (SC)
Becerra
Blumenauer
Bonner
Boren
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown, Corrine
Buchanan
Capuano
Carney
Cassidy
Clarke
Conyers
Crenshaw
Davis (AL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Doyle
Ellsworth
Gerlach
Gingrey (GA)
Gordon (TN)

Granger
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hastings (WA)
Himes
Hinchev
Hoekstra
Holden
Johnson (IL)
Kanjorski
Kind
King (NY)
Lamborn
Linder
Lipinski
Lucas
Maloney
McCauley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meeks (NY)
Moran (VA)
Murphy, Patrick
Neal (MA)
Nunes
Pallone
Pascarell

Payne
Poe (TX)
Rangel
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sarbanes
Schock
Shimkus
Shuster
Sires
Smith (WA)
Souder
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Taylor
Teague
Thompson (CA)
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Velázquez
Wamp
Waters
Weiner
Wexler

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1908

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 833, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea.”

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 509, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 509.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 352, nays 0, not voting 80, as follows:

[Roll No. 834]

YEAS—352

Aderholt
Adler (NJ)
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow

Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bean
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggart
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boccheri

Boehner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Braley (IA)
Bright
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite,
Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess

Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Cao
Capito
Capps
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castle
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Chandler
Childers
Chu
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Dahlkemper
Davis (CA)
Davis (KY)
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Dreier
Driehaus
Duncan
Edwards (MD)
Edwards (TX)
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxy
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gallely
McHenry
Giffords
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Graves
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Guthrie
Hall (TX)
Halvorson
Hare
Harman
Harper
Heinrich
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins

Hill
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kilroy
King (IA)
Kingston
Kirk
Kirkpatrick (AZ)
Kissell
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Kosmas
Kratovil
Kucinich
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourrette
Latta
Lee (CA)
Lee (NY)
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
LoBiondo
Loebbeck
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Luetkemeyer
Lujan
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel
E.
Lynch
Mack
Maffei
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey (CO)
Markey (MA)
Marshall
Massa
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McClintock
McCollum
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McMahon
McNerney
Meek (FL)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Minnick
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy (NY)

Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler (NY)
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Nye
Oberstar
Obey
Olson
Olver
Ortiz
Pastor (AZ)
Paul
Paulsen
Pence
Perlmutter
Perriello
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Polis (CO)
Pomeroy
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (WI)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schauer
Schiff
Schmidt
Schneider
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Snyder
Space
Speier
Stearns
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Terry
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Van Hollen
Visclosky
Walden

NOT VOTING—80

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Barrett (SC)
Becerra
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Bonner
Boren
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown, Corrine
Capuano
Carney
Clarke
Conyers
Crenshaw
Davis (AL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Doyle
Flake
Gerlach
Gingrey (GA)
Gordon (TN)

Granger
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Himes
Hinchev
Hoekstra
Holden
Johnson (IL)
Kind
King (NY)
Lamborn
Linder
Lipinski
Lucas
Maloney
McCauley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meeks (NY)
Moran (VA)
Murphy, Patrick
Neal (MA)
Nunes
Pallone

Pascarell
Payne
Poe (TX)
Radanovich
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sarbanes
Schock
Shimkus
Shuster
Sires
Smith (WA)
Souder
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Taylor
Teague
Thompson (CA)
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Velázquez
Wamp
Waters
Weiner
Wexler

□ 1915

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, on November 2, 2009, I was unable to cast votes due to personal reasons. I was not present for rollcall votes 832 through 834. Had I been present, I would have cast a “yea” vote for final passage of H.R. 1168. I would have cast a “yea” vote for final passage of H. Res. 291. Also, I would have cast a “yea” vote for the final passage of S. 509.

CONGRATULATING NEVADA ON
THE 145TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS
STATEHOOD

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Nevada on the 145th anniversary of its statehood.

On October 31, 1864, President Abraham Lincoln admitted Nevada into the Union as the 36th State, which is an anniversary that is celebrated today throughout the State as Nevada Day.

Over the past 145 years, Nevadans have exemplified their State motto: “All for our country.” Their patriotism and sense of duty have made critical contributions to our Nation’s security in times of war and peace. During World War II and the Cold War, Basic Magnesium Mines and the Nevada Test Site played key roles in United States’ victories.

Today, Nevada is a premier destination for tourists, business travelers,

family vacationers, and outdoor enthusiasts throughout the United States and around the globe. They are attracted by Nevada's many unique features, including the fabulous Las Vegas Strip, the Hoover Dam and beautiful outdoor settings ranging from vibrant desert landscapes to grand ski slopes.

Nevada exemplifies the independence, opportunity and pioneering spirit of the West. So I join my fellow Nevadans in celebrating our 145th anniversary.

THE ATHALIE RANGE CULTURAL ARTS FOUNDATION

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to recognize the Athalie Range Cultural Arts Foundation and its upcoming annual Celebration of Life event honoring those who have made significant contributions to the African American community. This year, Miami-Dade County Commissioner Audrey Edmonson, WHQT General Manager Jerry Rushin, and retired Bacardi Heritage Foundation president Jose Bacardi will be honored.

The Athalie Range Cultural Arts Foundation helps to encourage the appreciation and the enrichment of arts, especially of African American arts, in south Florida. The foundation was named after one of south Florida's most dedicated and courageous residents.

Athalie Range was a pioneer in our community, first as a civil rights activist and later as a public official. As the PTA president of Liberty City Elementary, she became a champion for the students of Miami-Dade County. She informed the school board about the deplorable conditions of Liberty City schools, and she demanded better resources for those schools.

Athalie became the first African American to serve on the Miami City Commission, and she also became the first African American and the first woman to head the Florida Department of Community Affairs. Athalie Range lived a life of humility that underscored her deep commitment to civil rights, justice and opportunity for all.

I commend the Athalie Range Cultural Arts Foundation for continuing in Athalie's footsteps, for helping to support the arts and for enriching the lives of all of south Florida residents.

ENERGY

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, in January, President Obama took office while facing the worst economic crisis in generations.

Faced with that tremendous challenge, President Obama and the Democratic Congress responded with the

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, an aggressive plan to jump-start our economy and to create jobs.

As we look back on the Recovery Act's first 8 months, its success in averting catastrophe is clear. We are not out of the woods yet, and much more work remains to create good jobs and to lower unemployment; but there are positive signs that the recession is over and that the economic policies pursued by the Democrats are starting to work.

Just last week, the Obama administration made important announcements to invest \$3.4 billion into the smart energy grid and into the first round of awards under the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Energy, or the ARPA-E program. These announcements by the administration show that the Recovery Act is working, giving investors the confidence they need to leverage private funds to create new clean-energy jobs to put people back to work and to revolutionize the way we power our economy and drive American innovation.

PELOSI'S TAKEOVER IS BAD FOR JOBS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the Pelosi takeover bill is nearly 2,000 pages of regulations and tax hikes that will strangle small businesses across America. At the same time we celebrate the new jobs being created by Boeing in South Carolina, the Pelosi takeover will destroy jobs, and we must stop it.

Senior citizens are under attack by squeezing Medicare. The Pelosi takeover will impose \$135 billion in taxes on small businesses. In addition, this bill includes nearly \$500 billion in other taxes, including a surtax on small businesses. The Nation's largest small business association, the National Federation of Independent Business, NFIB, reports that this employer mandate will negatively impact small businesses, eliminating 1.6 million jobs.

I encourage Speaker PELOSI to scrap her health care takeover and to work across the aisle with Republicans to adopt elements of H.R. 3400 and to give small businesses the opportunity to pull together to receive competitive rates.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, this weekend, when I went home, I went to the laundry.

A gentleman came up to me and said, You know, we've been friends for 40

years, and you're more liberal than I am—I'm a conservative—but let me tell you that I had a heart attack last month. Do you know what it cost? It cost \$100,000. He said, Y'all have got to pass something with this health care. It's just too expensive, and if I were in a different situation, I might lose my health care and might not be able to get it.

I had a Halloween party at a friend's house. I'm 60, and my friends are within the margin of error. They're about the same age. Several of them had had cancer, and they talked about how they couldn't get out of their health policies. The premiums were going up. The deductibles were going up, and it was costing them more and more; and they weren't authorizing certain treatments that they needed.

They said, You need to pass that health care bill. It's important.

I went to my local pharmacy, and a lady came up to me, and she told me about what the cost of prescription drugs was doing to her. I told her we were going to close the doughnut hole, that we were going to help her with her prescription drug prices.

We need to get this country's health care policy where it doesn't destroy the financial condition of people's lives. We need to allow them to move on.

THANKING THE AIRMEN OF BARKSDALE

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, my district in northwest Louisiana was hit with severe storms and tornadoes which left neighborhoods tattered, families without homes, and thousands threatened by levees that were threatening to break.

On Friday night, Bossier Parish officials had exhausted all options to save this levee when many citizens and especially the airmen of Barksdale Air Force Base mobilized to protect this community. Colonel Steven Basham assembled 140 airmen; and through their efforts, the levees were saved that night.

Over the days that followed, over 400 airmen worked around the clock to protect the levees, the homes and the families that surrounded it. Enlisted, officers and even generals worked side by side in an effort to make sure that floodwaters did not destroy Bossier Parish.

I want to extend my sincere gratitude for their dedication and work during this natural disaster; and I want to say that the efforts of these airmen prove, once again, why the United States military is the greatest assemblage of outstanding men and women in the world.

VETERANS' SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE AND SERVICEMEMBERS PROTECTION ACT OF 2009

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H.R. 3949, which was on the floor of the House today. I was delayed in coming to Washington because I was meeting with my union members to talk about jobs. Yet I am excited about this legislation that Chairman FILNER has brought to the floor, and I thank him for his leadership, which involves protecting and providing for servicemembers. There are currently 25 million veterans—1,630,000 in Texas with 34,000 veterans living in my community.

I am very proud that he put into the bill my vision impairment bill, which will provide for scholarships to help train those who can work with the visually impaired service veterans, many of whom have suffered from the IED explosions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

It would also protect parents who can be buried with their children. It will keep servicemembers from being evicted or from being foreclosed on when they're serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Then of course it will provide for small businesses of veterans preferred to be on the list so that they can obtain businesses or business opportunities in the United States Government.

This is very important for the upcoming Veterans Day. We must celebrate our veterans, and I am very grateful that my vision impaired bill is in this bill, H.R. 3949.

RECOGNIZING NOVEMBER AS AMERICAN DIABETES MONTH

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to call attention to November as American Diabetes Month.

Today, 24 million Americans have diabetes, and in this 1 minute that it takes me to give this speech, three more Americans will be diagnosed. The rate of diabetes cases is definitely on the rise, and it is becoming more severe. Based on our current trends, one out of every three children will eventually suffer from diabetes. Unlike cancer, heart disease and strokes, the death rate due to complications from diabetes has actually increased.

Diabetes not only exacts great personal harm; it imposes financial harm as well. Diabetes in the United States costs \$174 billion annually, and the cost of caring for someone with diabetes accounts for \$1 out of every \$5 in total health care costs.

Changing this trend begins with raising awareness about diabetes. So, Mr. Speaker, let's all commit to doing more to educate Americans on the seriousness of this disease.

THE PELOSI HEALTH CARE BILL

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, this is the Pelosi health care bill: 1,990 pages. Nobody in this place has even come close to reading it. In addition to that, it costs \$2.25 million per word. That's per word. There are almost 3,500 "shalls" in there, and a "shall" is a mandate that Congress do something. Nobody has read this thing. It's going to cost all this money.

Members of Congress can exempt themselves from being involved in the public option. Every time you go to a town hall meeting, the American people say, Are you guys going to be included? Well, this bill says you don't have to be included if you're a Member of Congress because we're more important than the guy on the street.

You know, this is just a terrible, terrible bill; and the people of this country don't want it passed. I've had five town hall meetings, and the people overwhelmingly are opposed to this thing. They want us to solve the problems of health care. They want us to do it in a responsible way, but they certainly don't want this thing, and this doesn't even include the manager's amendment. This is a bad bill, and it should be defeated.

□ 1930

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

OCTOBER HAS BEEN THE DEADLIEST MONTH FOR U.S. TROOPS IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I stood up in the House in late July and said the following words, "Five American soldiers have been killed in Afghanistan this week. That brings the death toll in July to 31, making this the deadliest month for our troops since the conflict in Afghanistan began."

Tragically, Mr. Speaker, July didn't hold the record for long. It was quickly replaced by August as the deadliest month. Now, 55 of our troops have died in October, making this the deadliest month yet.

We can't blame the troops for this, of course. They continue to fight with tremendous skill and with bravery. They do everything our Nation asks of them.

So what's to blame? It's our strategy. It's a strategy which has relied almost exclusively on military action for over 8 years while ignoring the critically

important political, economic, and cultural aspects of the conflict. Yet President Obama is now being urged to double down on the military-only policy that has failed us and send in another 40,000 troops.

If we go down that road, what can the American people expect? They can expect higher troop levels, higher casualty rates, and many years of war that can end up costing us over a trillion dollars. Even if we do all that, the odds will still be stacked against us. That's not a strategy for success, Mr. Speaker. I think we can do better.

If we want to succeed in Afghanistan, we must change the way we do business there. Instead of fighting extremists after they have gotten a foothold, let's invest our resources on what would prevent violent extremism from taking root in the first place. That includes economic development, jobs, reconstruction, education, health care, civil affairs, and diplomacy. All would help stabilize Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, a serious commitment to a civilian surge of experts and aid workers to help the Afghan people develop their economy would make a huge difference over there. We must also develop a much better set of rigorous metrics to evaluate progress and report the results to the American people. Then we could develop an exit strategy. We could send the message that our involvement in Afghanistan is not open-ended.

It would also help to reassure the Afghan people that we have no intention of occupying their land, because right now too many Afghan citizens see America as an occupying force. That, more than anything else, Mr. Speaker, is fueling anti-Americanism and the insurgency. We must also do everything we can to assure a credible central government in Kabul to help with humanitarian and other efforts to improve the lives of the Afghan people. These are just some of the elements of smart security that we need to use in Afghanistan.

I have offered a comprehensive strategy for smart security in House Resolution 363, because I firmly believe that it would be a blueprint for victory against extremism in Afghanistan and other parts of the world. Mr. Speaker, by shifting from military power only to smart power, we can help Afghanistan to build a stable and functioning State. We can save the lives of our troops, and we can go a long way toward defeating the extremists who threaten America and the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, continuing on from my 1-minute I gave earlier, this bill, the Pelosi bill, the Pelosi health care bill that the Democrats are embracing is almost 2,000 pages long. It's going to cost \$2.25 million for each word, and that does not include the manager's amendment, which we have not yet seen. I imagine it's going to come down probably sometime tomorrow.

As I said before, Members of Congress don't have to enroll in this public option which is in the bill. I hope everybody in America, if they happen to be paying attention—I know I can't talk to them, but if I were talking to them I would say, Hey, ask your Congressman why he is voting for a bill that's going to exempt him and make sure he can join a private health care insurance plan when there is a public option in here that he should be joining just like everybody else has to.

This bill is not going to cost under a trillion dollars as the Speaker has said. If you put the doc fix in there, it's going to cost another \$250 billion. So we are looking at something between 1.2 and 1.3 trillion at a time when we are suffering economically in this country. Unemployment is close to 10 percent. The deficit this year, the deficit this year is already 1.4 trillion, almost three times just what it was last year, and we are going to add this new bill, which is going to cost another 1.2 to 1.3 trillion dollars.

The American people simply don't want it. Let's go into some of the other things that are in the bill, the Pelosi health care bill.

First of all, there is a surtax on small business people. Now, at a time when we have unemployment that's almost 10 percent, this is going to drive additional jobs out of the country offshore or they are going to have to cut back some of these businesses that stay here in America and let people go, which means there will be more unemployment. There is an employer mandate that's still applied to small businesses. Small businesses that have a payroll as low as \$500,000 a year are going to be hit with a tax.

There is a new medical device tax. In Indiana, we have some companies that make medical devices to help people, prosthetic devices, wheelchairs and things like that. There's a new medical tax that's going to be levied on these kinds of devices of 2.5 percent, and that's going to be passed on to people who are suffering from medical problems that need these medical devices. We call that a wheelchair tax that's in this bill.

There's going to be new taxes on health savings accounts. The Pelosi bill eliminates the nontaxable reimbursements of over-the-counter medication from HSAs, HRAs, and FSAs.

There is a new payroll tax, and the Pelosi bill creates a new voluntary payroll tax to fund new long-term care programs requiring mandatory spending, also known as a new entitlement.

Abortions are authorized in a break from the Hyde amendment and other longstanding pro-life policies. The bill includes the Capps amendment to authorize government funding of abortions through the public option. It also establishes an accounting gimmick to justify subsidizing private plans that cover abortion.

Next, Members of Congress, as I said, are exempt. They say that they may—not have to—enroll in the public option. At the same time it says “may” in there, there are 3,425 times in the bill it says you must, shall do something, and “shall” means it's a mandatory. There are mandatory things in here to the tune of 3,425 times.

Doctors reimbursement levels are up in the air. They've got those budget gimmicks that I talked about, which removes the doctor fix, the medical doctor fix of 250 billion, which takes this up to between \$1.2 and \$1.3 trillion.

It reduces affordability credits and instead expands Medicaid. The States are going to love that. They are going to shovel a lot of this onto the States who are already suffering, and they are going to have to raise taxes.

The Pelosi bill reduces the size of affordability credits for patients to purchase the insurance in the exchange and, instead, expands eligibility for Medicaid to up to 150 percent of the Federal poverty level, placing more Americans on entitlement programs at a cost to both the Federal and the State governments.

As I said most States are in the red, and they are not going to like this. Ask any Governor; he will tell you.

This also significantly changes the Medicare part D prescription drug program. The Pelosi bill requires the Secretary of HHS to negotiate drug prices for the prescription drug program. There are also several provisions in the bill that will likely increase seniors' premiums as identified by CBO, including the bill that would force seniors, force seniors, to pay at least an additional 20 percent more for their Medicare prescription drug coverage. That's part D.

These things the American people need to know. This is not a good bill. There is a better way, a better way.

HONORING SENTINELS OF FREEDOM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 461, a resolution honoring the Sentinels of Freedom, which passed this afternoon by a unanimous vote when I was coming here this afternoon on the airplane.

Our Nation's veterans made tremendous sacrifices in defending our great

Nation, and they deserve the best treatment upon returning home. Whether it is through education, employment, or health care, no veteran should fall through the cracks.

The Sentinels of Freedom, an organization based in San Ramon and Danville, California, provides opportunities to veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and has demonstrated a commitment to America's heroes that we should all emulate. The Sentinels of Freedom Scholarship Foundation awards 4-year scholarships to severely injured veterans who began their service on or after September 11, 2001.

The program provides veterans with community support and mentoring, help with job placement, financial assistance for rent or mortgages, and continuing educational opportunities. The Sentinels of Freedom has helped dozens of veterans in States across the country, including California, Texas, Colorado, and Wisconsin.

Many military personnel fighting in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom are returning home with serious injuries that hamper their transition from military to civilian life. It's critical that we have programs in place that will help these veterans receive a quality education, secure a job, stay in their home, and lead a fulfilling life. I have seen firsthand the exceptional work and dedication of the Sentinels of Freedom and the way this organization helps to improve the lives of veterans. This group is a true leader in the community and deserves our highest respect.

I want to thank my colleagues for helping me to recognize and honor the outstanding work the Sentinels of Freedom have performed on behalf of our Nation's veterans.

WOMEN'S INFLUENCE IN HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, in many households, women are the main link between our family members and the health care that they receive. Women make the majority of health care decisions for their families. As the mother of two young adults and a new grandmother, I know the many responsibilities placed on women with children. From the time children are born to far beyond when they reach adulthood, a mother's care and advice are never far away. If we are fortunate, eventually we will be the grown children of elderly parents.

In my family, my mother suffers from Alzheimer's, among many other age-related problems. I know the responsibility of caring for our elders. My day would not be complete without at least making sure that I, along with my husband, children, and parents, have and take all of our prescriptions

and make it to our doctors' appointments on time. It is no wonder that women are the majority of health care workers in the United States. We are well prepared for this task.

□ 1945

Every American deserves access to health care insurance. This is our goal, and it must be the goal of our Congress. The goal must not be a bill that costs \$1 trillion. The goal must not be a bill written behind closed doors. The goal must not be a bill that increases taxes on our families and all of our small businesses. The goal must not be a bill that passes huge debts on to our children and grandchildren.

Women deserve better. Every American deserves better. They deserve health care treatment, and every American deserves both health care treatment and efficiency at an affordable cost. But as America's mothers will tell you, Congress should be utilizing what works in our health care system and fixing what does not. Mothers are masters at finding commonsense and practical solutions.

What we currently see is a health care system burdened by excesses and inefficient bureaucracy. What we see is our children denied coverage because of a preexisting condition. What we see is parents changing jobs, causing our families to lose our doctors. What we see is women and our parents being charged more for insurance premiums because of their gender or because of their age.

What we don't see is how a government takeover of our health care is going to provide for our families' needs. What we don't see is how a bureaucratic takeover of our health care will bring down the cost of health care procedures or health care insurance. What we don't see is how the Pelosi \$1 trillion bill helps us more than it hurts us.

Every American family deserves affordable health care and affordable health insurance. To use a mother's saying, let's not go throwing out the baby with the bath water. Simple, commonsense, cost-effective reform is how we can include all families in our health insurance market. We can and we must accomplish health care reform without ruining the current health care coverage that is enjoyed by the majority of families.

Women across the United States want to protect their family's coverage while ensuring that every other mother out there has the same access that she does. The Pelosi bill is not the answer. We can do better. We must do better.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. INGLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. INGLIS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. FOXX addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HEALTH CARE FOR WOMEN IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I am so thrilled to be here tonight to talk about health care for women in America. Throughout this evening, you are going to see colleagues of mine join me on the floor as we talk about women's health care, to talk about the alternatives that we as Republicans have; how we would answer these questions that women and families have; how they would make the decisions; and some of the great ideas that we would bring forward.

You know, I think there is something that has become very evident to us over the last few weeks; women make most of the health care decisions in their families. Indeed, we have surveys that show that women are making as many as 85-90 percent of all health care decisions for their families, for their children, for their grandchildren many times, and for elderly parents. The Sandwich Generation is really jumping in and making these decisions. They are watching so closely the alternatives for health reform.

Of course, while we all agree that there is indeed a need for health re-

form, there is a big divide in this House. We have many to the left that are saying they want a government-centered plan, and then we have many of us who are on the right who are saying we want it to be patient-centered. We want the focus to stay with patients, with families, and let's not have a bureaucrat in the room.

We know that women are indeed watching. They have seen what the Democrats have to offer, and they are unimpressed. They are not impressed with this. They know that it limits and restricts their options.

Women are the drivers in the health care marketplace, and I think American women are going to be the drivers in the decisions that are made as we look at how we reform health care, because indeed it should be patient-centered, with families and individuals having control of those health care decisions. We don't want Washington and a layer of bureaucracy making those decisions.

A couple of weeks ago, I saw a story in Politico, and it said the Democrats needed to do a better job in messaging and trying to get their message out to women. I wrote a response to that, because I felt like, you know, they have gotten that message out. Women did not like what they were seeing.

So I am very appreciative that CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, who is vice chair of our caucus, and MICHELE BACHMANN from Minnesota have taken the lead for the Republican women tonight in establishing this Special Order time. We know that we have better bills, and they will put women more in charge of health care decisions and bring down the cost, because just like too much of the family budget gets spent on taxes, too much of it gets spent on health care.

We need something to bring the costs down. Even the CBO says the Democrat bill is going to drive the cost up. It is going to drive the cost of health care up, it is going to drive the cost of health insurance up, and we know also it is going to restrict access. We know that women want to have a say in this, and they don't want a bill that is going to end up hurting them and hurting their alternatives at the end of the day. So making certain that we have a plan that works for women is important.

Now, we know that in Speaker PELOSI's bill the Democrats outline how much the government will pay for certain procedures. A doctor who wants to do business with the government will have to accept that rate, and if you are an insurance company, why would you offer any more money than the going rate established by the government?

Well, we also know from what we have seen, from public option health care and the test case that took place in my State of Tennessee, that this doesn't always work. What you see is, when you have a public option plan in competition with private insurance,

the cost goes up, restriction to access takes place.

With TennCare, the test case for public option health care that took place in our State, we saw the costs quadruple within a few years' period of time. We know that that hurt certain procedures and access to certain procedures, like cardiology, and we are very concerned about the restrictions to cardiology that are in the bill that the Speaker has brought forward.

Mammography, we are very concerned about what would happen to mammography and the ability to have those imaging tests and procedures that are needed and are necessary. The Speaker's bill does we think end up hurting women in a couple of specific areas that I have just pointed out, breast cancer health and cardiology, and we know that there is a better way to do this.

Let me touch on three bills that Republicans have that I think give the ideas that women are looking for. They bring forward great ideas that are patient-centered, that are focused on individuals, focused on reducing costs, increasing access, and making certain that more individuals have the ability to access the health care that they need.

One of those is H.R. 3218. It is by Representative JOHN SHADEGG. It would allow small businesses, churches, alumni associations and other small institutions to pool together, to come together just like you do when you join those associations, come together with that membership and then be able to look forward and say, all right, we are going to offer a health insurance plan. It also would allow for those insurance plans to be implemented across State lines. That is a pretty good idea, and that is a way, by pooling together small businesses and individuals, pooling together, then what you do is to lower that cost.

Now, there is also H.R. 3713, and this is by Representative MIKE ROGERS out of Michigan. He is a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee with us. He has taken an interest in and a leadership role in this issue.

What he has done is to look at the things that the President has said he wanted to accomplish, things that we all agree need to be done: Insurance market reforms, making certain that we have affordable insurance, access to affordable insurance for individuals who have preexisting and chronic conditions; making certain that individuals that are in good standing with an insurance policy are not dropped from that policy if they become ill and want to exercise that policy; making certain that portability is in place.

One of the frustrating things we hear often about, especially from women, is the fact that they may change jobs and then they find they can't take that insurance with them. How many times have you talked with a friend or a neighbor who said, you know, I have had a great job offer, but I can't take

it. I have a child who has a chronic condition, or my spouse has a chronic condition, and, because of that, I would have to deal with the preexisting condition issue if I were to change insurance, if I were to change jobs. So addressing those portability issues is tremendously important.

Now, there is another component in this, liability reform. We all hear it. We hear it regularly. We hear from our physicians. We hear from our neighbors. We hear from individuals who say, you know, the practice of defensive medicine, having to make certain, having to make certain that you have a physician who is getting a validating opinion, who sent you to someone else for a second opinion, who sent you to someone else—defensive medicine drives the cost up.

Some of the physicians who are Members of the House have told us that fully they believe that this drives up the cost of medicine repeatedly to the tune of tens of billions of dollars every single year—every single year. So it increases that cost. And it is also a inconvenience to our seniors.

I had a constituent call me the other day and she said, Marsha, I just want to tell you what has happened to me as we have been going through this situation. She has a chronic condition. They were just beginning to address it. She went to her primary care physician, who ran a test and said, I think you need to see a specialist, and referred her. She went to him. He ran the test again, the same test, the same facility, ordered by a different doctor. He got the results back, and he said, I think you need to go and visit with Dr. So-and-so, so that you can get a second opinion on this.

She goes back. She sees the new physician. He runs the test again. Then she goes back to him. That is three times. And then the insurance wanted her to go for a fourth test. As she said, it was the same test run four different times. And her question was very simple. She said, Why don't they run the test once? Run it once and read it four different times, rather than having me have to get my daughter to take off work, which is a half a day for her to go to the test and then return home.

□ 2000

It's expensive. It is invasive. It is inconvenient. It is something that Congress could address and do something about, and I think that most people agree with that. It is of concern to us that H.R. 3962, the Speaker's bill, is 1,990 pages of bill. It is a big bill. This bill, this big huge bill—and we're going to have that bill on the floor for you to see tonight—this bill would be, really, a bill that is not fair to our seniors, and it does concern us. It's one of the primary concerns that we do have in this piece of legislation, the unfair practices that it would move forward on our seniors.

As we are going through our Special Order tonight, if you would like to log

on to my Web site, blackburn.house.gov and pull down the legislation and follow along through it as we go through it, we certainly would appreciate you doing so. As I said, we feel the legislation is going to be very unfair to seniors. They're talking about making cuts to the tune of \$500 billion in Medicare, basically doing away with Medicare Advantage. Then look what's happening with this, cutting Medicare by 2017. We all know the Medicare trust fund is going to be running out of money. But what we're seeing from the Democrat leadership of this House is a failure to recognize that Medicare is a trust fund. Medicare is not a slush fund. And we want to make certain that we protect our seniors as we work through this bill.

I am so pleased that we have women who are joining us on the floor tonight. At this time, I yield to the gentlelady from West Virginia, SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, for her comments on health care.

Mrs. CAPITO. Thank you. I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee. She has been an advocate for health care but also commonsense health care. I think that's what we're facing here today. We're looking at a bill that Speaker PELOSI has put before this body. We've already heard that it's 1,990 pages. I heard it weighs 20 pounds. It just defies logic that anybody can honestly say that they know each and every thing that is in this bill. For those of you who know Washington, who know what can happen, I think that would raise some serious questions—it certainly does in my mind—but in your mind as to what are in the far reaches of this bill.

I would like to talk a little bit about women and health care because being a Member of Congress, a woman Member of Congress, we have certain duties, but we have so many other duties, like women across this country, that when we come into Washington, like many of us did today, we still have a little bit of our hearts or a lot of our hearts at home with our families, with our children, with our husbands, with our parents, with our siblings because we're the nurturers. We're the ones who, as women, oversee the health care in the family. We're the ones who, when the babies are little and they're coughing at night, put our ears to their chests to see if they're having some respiratory issues, and I think we're the ones that, as we become the sandwich generation, much like I am—I have grown children and elderly parents—that we're the ones that our parents come to to help them get to the appointments, fill their medications, help them with the forms, make sure that things are going in the right direction when they can no longer depend on each other.

I'm quite lucky. My parents are in their eighties, and they're extremely self-sufficient on their own. But someday they're going to need that help that I as a daughter and my sister and my brother will provide for them. In

West Virginia, I found—just coming here today, it was astounding to me of the number of folks that just randomly approached me about knowing what is on the docket here, the Speaker's over 1,900-page \$1 trillion health care bill, and people are concerned. I was in Wendy's having lunch today, and I met a woman. She asked me to come over and talk with her. She is 75 years old, quite remarkable, and her mother had died the day before. We have a great history of longevity in our State. She is very concerned about this bill because she feels that not only is the bill being balanced on almost \$500 billion in cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, which will influence her health care, but she is very concerned about government bureaucracy making decisions for her health care. She is very concerned about the government getting in between her decisions and her doctor's decisions. Quite honestly, she was afraid of a rationing of care. Because she is 75 years old, is she going to get the same care she might have if she was 50 or if she was 25? These are the kinds of thoughts that are very real, and they were very real for her, as I talked with her over lunch.

Then as I was going to get on my plane this afternoon, I was buying a bottle of water, and the lady behind the counter said, Well, you're going back to Washington, right?

I said, Right, going back to Washington.

She said, It's health care, right?

I said, Right, it's health care.

And this voice in the back of the room said, Don't mess with my health care. Again, her view was, she's not on Medicare yet, but she had parents that were. She is concerned about their Medicare, but her concern was government-run health care. She sees this bill as it is. It's a government reach into her health care, and she was very concerned.

Then as I was coming back in from the airport, I had a man who asked me, Going to talk about health care, right?

I said, Right.

And he goes, Well, let me tell you, he said, If in any way that health care bill would leave a crack in the door for my taxpayer's dollars to go for funding of abortion, I am going to go on a rampage. He said, I can understand, and I want to give, and I want to help, but this was his line in the sand.

So you can see that everybody has a different perspective, and the 1,900 pages that are in the Speaker's bill are causing great concerns on a whole lot of levels.

I did some research on West Virginia women. Of West Virginia residents, 51 percent are women, and the 442,000 women in West Virginia who receive health care coverage through their employer, which is almost 60 percent of the women, I am concerned about them because they have health care that generally serves their needs. We need to go in and make sure we make adjustments, that we fill the cracks in

the lack of access or coverage. But I am concerned and I think it's a real concern that the Speaker's bill is going to come in and force over 60 percent of the women who have coverage for their employers to be put into a government-run insurance program that they don't choose, is not of their own choosing. Then maybe if that's not what happens, then the insurance option that they have is going to be the one that the government panel says meets adequate coverage. Well, what does that mean? What does that mean to the 60 percent of the women covered through their insurance through their employer?

I think we have to look at what this is going to do for small businesses. In our State of West Virginia, only 37 percent of small businesses who have less than 50 employees provide health insurance coverage as compared to over 95 percent of larger firms employing more than 50. We need to fill that gap. As Republicans, we've come together to find ways to fill the gap for small businesses, to make it affordable, make it available, make it accessible. But the bill that is created by Speaker PELOSI and those in the leadership does not do enough. What it does do is puts another tax on small business to provide that insurance.

Lastly, I asked a lot of the women in my district what they really thought about the plan as they understand it, expanded government involvement in health care. Of the women polled, 54 percent said that they would not personally trade their coverage for a public plan; 56 percent disagreed that they would be best served by government-run health care; 75 percent have said they don't want significant changes in their own health care; and 64 percent of the women in West Virginia said that they prefer private insurance over the public option. These are women that are accessing the health care system not just for themselves, not just for their own families. They're accessing it for their parents. Many of them work in the health care system. They see how it's working. They see the changes that could be made, and they really are rejecting it, I think, out of hand. I know my colleagues will expand on this tonight. The women are rejecting the types of changes where government goes between you and your health care provider.

I believe that is what has happened in this plan, not to mention the over \$1 trillion price tag that's attached to this bill, which both men and women across the country know that this is going to be on the backs of their children and grandchildren, a legacy of debt and deficit that's going to be passed on.

I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee and all of my colleagues for being here tonight. Those are some of the perspectives that I have. It's so interesting to me that in the brief time today that I was out among folks, how tuned in everybody is

to this, how aware. Because health care is so personal. It's such an everyday thing for so many people that everybody has an opinion because they're basically living it. This isn't something they're seeing from afar or they're hoping happens or it's happening to their neighbor. It's happening in everybody's home in America, and people are standing up and saying how they feel about it, where the changes need to be made, and how they feel. Generally speaking, today the Speaker's 1,900-page bill, \$1 trillion bill, got a big goose egg today because I did not run into one person who said, That sounds like the plan for me.

Thank you.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlewoman from West Virginia, and I thank her for those comments about women in West Virginia and how this bill would affect them.

What we are hearing all across our Nation is, This is not a bill that women want. Indeed, the blog spot, whymomsrule.com ran a survey, and it said that only 7 percent of American women think the health care proposals that have been brought by the leadership, the Democrat leadership, are proposals that reflect their concerns. We know that. We are listening. We hear them. And we have ways to solve this issue so it puts patients and families in charge of those decisions, not the Federal Government. It preserves that freedom. Indeed, for small businesses—as we all know, women-owned small businesses are a very active part in our economy, in our financial sectors, and we're very concerned about the impact for employer-based insurance that this bill would have on those women-owned small businesses.

At this time, I want to turn to the gentlelady from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) who has been such an active voice not only in the Education and Labor Committee but in the House as a whole, as she has been a leader on this issue.

Mrs. BIGGERT. I thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee, and thank you for having this tonight.

You know, I was just thinking; I've got four children and eight grandchildren. So I think as a mom and a grandmother, I've always been very concerned about health care, and I want to make sure that my family has the best that's possible.

When I was raising the children, all we had was Dr. Spock. We didn't have all the technology and all the wonderful drug therapies and the health care that we have now in the United States. I am always concerned about the quality of health care. Sure, we need reform, but we want to make sure that there's that quality of health care that we have now. We've got moms, doctors, nurses, caregivers, taxpayers and women that really play a critical role in the health care debate. Eighty-five percent of women are the primary health care decision-makers in the home, and that's why we take this so seriously.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that 82 million adult women are moms, and 32 million women have a child living in their homes. So women are overwhelmingly supportive of health care reform, but they want to know that this reform will improve the quality and affordability of their current health care. For many women and their families, higher health care cost means the difference between receiving care and going without. Unfortunately, the Pelosi health care bill empowers government bureaucracies and undermines a woman's ability to make the best health care decisions for her and her family.

□ 2015

I have got a letter that one of my constituents sent. It's from Maryanne, and she writes to me:

"As a registered nurse and mother of a severely disabled child, I beg you to seriously consider the long-and short-term effects of the new health care proposal. I am horrified to think that medical decisions will be determined by our government. I have seen this fail in many countries. I happen to be of the opinion that the precious commodity of life far exceeds the almighty dollar."

You know, one of my daughters lives in London. And when this health bill came up, I said to her, Seriously, tell me what is the health care like in the U.K.? What is it like versus here?

And as a matter of fact, every time my daughter brings my three grandchildren home for a visit, she takes them to see the pediatrician that I took her to see just to make sure that they're in the best of health that they can be and make sure that somebody from the United States is looking after them.

And she said, Well, now, in London it's a different system. It started out where doctors don't have this high debt. They don't have the high cost of the medical school that we have here. It's paid for. So they start in the system and they're in the public system. And then some of them become private doctors. Now, my daughter has the public health care, but she also has a private doctor. And she said, Well, in emergencies you're well taken care of. But it's the long term, and she gave me the example, let's say you have a rash on your arm, you go and they say we will make an appointment for you, but the appointment is 9 months later. She also said that if you go on and check on the current wait list in London—for example, the current wait list at the time that I checked was 11 months for a knee replacement, 10 months for a hip replacement, 5 months for a slipped disc, and about 8 months for a hernia operation. And these are just a few of these that they wait so long for.

Now, what that leads to also is rationing. And I had an event this morning where one of the doctors stood up and talked about his belief that there would be rationing, particularly with

how many doctors are going to want to remain in a situation like this where they really become staff. You know, we think of them as professionals. I always thought, oh, if I could be as smart as the doctors. To me, it was just the profession that was so outstanding.

And so this leads not only to rationing for these procedures, but also we've had a debate about the end of life and how 80 percent of the costs really are then. And I think as women, when I read in the first bill, and that has changed a little bit to be voluntary rather than mandatory counseling there, in my former life I was a probate attorney and I did estate planning, and what was always so important was to counsel families on aging and to make sure that they had the decision of the family, the decision of the elderly in what they wanted to happen.

So there was always this durable power of attorney that we did so that their wishes would be addressed and a cousin or somebody would say, oh, no, we can't do anything. But the durable power of attorney, the living will, and the do-not-resuscitate, if that's the wish of the person who would become ill in the end of life. And it's so important, but it's important to do it before you ever reach that time. And this bill focuses on that they're doing it as you have already aged. So this is something that should not be put into statute. This is something that families should address, and this is their choice and not some bureaucrat making it happen.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Reclaiming my time, I just want to expound on this point for just one moment because the point you're making is so relevant to this debate.

The bill that is before us now, the 1,990-page bill that Speaker PELOSI has brought forward, and we hear tomorrow there will be a manager's amendment that will be dropped or also added to this; so it's going to be more than 2,000 pages by the time we get to the end of the week, but in that bill there are the provisions that mandate that end-of-life counseling.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Well, I think that because of the concern and the outrage really of so many of the American people on that and particularly the seniors that were really put off by that, they have changed it to voluntary, and so it's a little bit better. But still that is something that shouldn't be in statute. If a family wants to go to the doctor and ask what are the things that we should do, but then to have the durable power of attorney so that the hospital, let's say somebody is in the hospital, they know what the wishes are of the patient as well as the family knows what the wishes of that patient are. But this should be done long before we get to that situation.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Reclaiming my time, that's one of those decisions that families make, that husbands and wives make, that parents and children make. It is not one that should be addressed with a "shall" or a "may" in a

Federal statute. And we all know that this bill has over 3,400 new mandates in it.

I yield to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. BIGGERT. It is so important and it has really been something that has really hit the fan, and there has been a lot of rhetoric on this. But just take it as this is a decision to be made by the family, the children and the patient; and it should be done early in life.

We have to make plans like that. It's not that something is never going to happen, but let's not mandate it or make it something that a doctor has to do and is paid to do as part of his job. The doctor as a counselor is fine, but the family should come to them and request that, not to say it in statute.

And I'm concerned about the rationing. It makes you think of, well, you're going to float out on an iceberg or something when the end of life comes. And what we want is to have quality of care throughout everybody's life and to make sure that we have the ability to do that. The doctors are the ones that do deal with these issues, but they need to have the map as to what the family wants in that regard.

So I think that women as the caregivers are the ones that have to make those decisions. And it's a tough decision to make, to bring up a subject early on that you really might not want to talk about; but it's something we all need to do, but to do it by our choice and not by a government-run plan telling us to do that.

So with that let me just say a couple of things about women, and there's been a new poll out. In this poll that was released on October 28, in short, women believe that their current health insurance is better for them and their families than what the Pelosi plan has proposed. And while a majority of women view health care reform as an important issue, only 42 percent are satisfied with the proposal that is brought before Congress and only 38 percent would like to change their own insurance to a public option. In fact, while 48 percent of women want slight changes to health care generally, 75 percent of women want few to no changes to their own health care.

That's kind of interesting. You talked about how I was on the Education and Labor Committee. And while we were marking up the bill, I had an amendment that said if you like the health care plan you have now, you can keep it, and that was voted down by the other side of the aisle unanimously.

Women are also very concerned with costs. You know, women care about affordability, and they are concerned with the costs. And only 5 percent of women believe that Congress should spend over \$1 trillion on health care reform, which is the cost, and 45 percent of women would be less likely to support a candidate that votes in favor of such a costly health care bill.

Women believe that health care reform is moving too fast, that Congress

should slow down. Only 9 percent of women want reform legislation in the next few weeks. And we're looking at addressing this this week. Twenty percent would like reform by the end of 2009, and 43 percent believe that Congress should pass a reform bill only when quality legislation is developed even if it means no deadline.

So I think we have got a health care plan that if everybody thought it was a great plan, we would be passing it and we would have passed it in July. But this is now July, August, September, October, and now we are into November, and there still are such concerns by the American people on this.

So I hope that we can slow down and really have a dialogue, a debate on this, and find common ground to find a bill that people would all get behind.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlewoman.

I appreciate so much that you brought up the fact that they continue to say if you like what you have, you can keep it.

The problem is you can't. Maybe you can keep it today or tomorrow or until the end of the year. But by the time you get to 2013, you're going to have to go through an exchange.

I have got a list here that is 111 new bureaucracies that are created by the Speaker's health care bill, 111 new bureaucracies. There is going to be a health choices commissioner that is going to have over 60 new directives on what kind of health care you can have. And you're going to have the exchange that has to approve the plan that your employer would possibly be able to offer. And if your employer's plan is not good enough, the employer gets an 8 percent tax.

So it's a little bit of a stretch to say if you like what you have, you can keep it when the whole playing field is going to change within just a few years.

And as you said so very well, women make those decisions. Seventy-five percent of the women are very comfortable with what they have, and women want to be able to shop for a plan that is going to best meet the needs of their families.

At this time I yield to Dr. FOXX, the gentlewoman from North Carolina, for her comments.

Ms. FOXX. I thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee for beginning the hour for us.

We stand up here and we talk a lot about what's in this bill, and I know that many Americans wonder are we telling the truth or not. But as you pointed out, there is a provision in that bill that will do away with private health insurance policies beginning in 2013. And if people want to find that, they can find it on page 94, section 202(c). I heard when I came in you were talking about how to read the bill by going to your Web site. I think all of us have Web sites with links to the bill, and I'm assuming most people also have links to these page numbers and

section numbers that will back up what we are saying.

I think one of the best things that has come out of the debate that has been going on about this health care, and as our colleague from Illinois said earlier, if this was such a great idea, this bill would have been passed in July, as our colleagues across the aisle wanted. But it isn't a good idea, and it's been very contentious. But we point out to people what's in the bill, and people have been reading the bill.

□ 2030

I think that is a very healthy thing to do, and I hope people will continue to read the bill. I am a bit surprised, actually. The bill was introduced on Thursday, we didn't have session on Friday, and tonight when we had Special Orders and the Democrats had the first hour, I thought they would be here defending this bill and explaining to the American people why this is such a wonderful thing. And yet, they didn't show up. Here we are doing our best to explain to our fellow Americans what is wrong about this bill and why they shouldn't be supporting it. I have found a dearth of Democrats out here defending the bill and saying, Let me tell you on page 94 what is good, or on page 112. It seems to me, if they really liked this bill, they would be doing that. I know over time we have done that kind of thing.

I want to say to my colleague from Tennessee how important I think it is to point out that there are going to be 111 new bureaucracies established by this bill. I am a small government conservative, and I have had the same experiences that my colleague from West Virginia has had. Everywhere I went this weekend, people said to me, Vote "no" on that health care bill. Do everything you can to stop that health care bill.

I am not finding people who are saying to me vote for this. My mail is running about 9½ against it to 1. I think the reason is the American people, the average American, understands that increased government intrusion in our lives takes away our freedom. This country is the freest country in the world. We are the greatest country in the world because of that. But when you expand the Federal Government's power over our lives, that undermines our freedom. And NANCY PELOSI's Big Government health care bill is the single largest expansion of government that we have seen in over a generation. It is, I think, a threat to our freedoms. I believe the average American understands that.

When I talk to school groups, I say to them the major difference between Democrats and Republicans is we believe that individuals can solve most of their problems. Yes, we need government. We need a police force. We need an Army. There are many things that we need. But very few things at the Federal level do we need. Republicans have figured this out. We have made

proposals. We have not talked much about those tonight. I think we need to at least say that we have made these proposals that fit with what the American people want.

They want to be able to buy insurance across State lines. They want to take a tax deduction for paying insurance premiums like their employer does. They want to be able to get into pools like my small business can join with other small businesses. We want to let the States come up with innovations. We have lots and lots of ideas like that that won't cost \$1.4 trillion but will solve this problem for the approximately 10 million Americans who want health insurance but can't afford it.

We are turning our whole country upside down to take care of 10 million Americans who want insurance but can't afford it. We want to do that. What it is going to do, if the American people have any hesitation about what we are talking about in terms of where we are going with health care, we need to point out that it will allow the IRS to be monitoring small businesses and, ultimately, us as individuals. I don't know anybody in this country that wants to be dealing with the IRS. We know what a friendly group they are. And we know what is going to happen to those bureaucracies that take over our health care decisions. That's just the wrong way to go.

We can beat this thing. We need the American people to be calling their Members of Congress who are on the other side who are either undecided or have said that they are going to vote for it and say that this is not what we want. We don't want a further erosion of our freedoms. We want to remain the greatest country in the world.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlelady for yielding back, and I appreciate that she mentioned how States need to be able to innovate, how they handle the Medicaid payments that are there. This is so very important because they are the ones that are delivering these services. This bill would increase the eligibility for Medicaid to 150 percent of the Federal poverty level. Now, what this does is to shift that burden over to our States. It takes that burden from the Federal Government and places it squarely in the lap of our States.

Now, most of our States have balanced budget amendments. Here we are handing them, and in my State of Tennessee, we know we have heard from our Governor's office that the expectation is this is going to cost us an extra \$735 million per year. Every State around the country is looking to see what it would cost them. They know that by shifting that Medicaid burden, expanding that eligibility to 150 percent and then shifting that burden to the States, well, it may help them with budgeting, those that are trying to pass this bill and are looking for budget gimmicks and trying to say it is going to cost less than \$1 trillion. Well,

that gimmickry might help them, but for the taxpayer who already has too much month left at the end of his money, what you are saying is get ready, your sales tax is going up. Your State property tax is going up. You are going to see State income taxes going up, and that is all because the Federal Government said, States get ready, it is coming to land in your lap.

I recognize the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Ms. FALLIN) about how this will affect the States.

Ms. FALLIN. I thank the gentlelady from Tennessee.

You are exactly right. I have heard from a lot of my State senators, representatives, and agencies in Oklahoma that if we pass a massive new Federal Government bureaucrat health care bill that has unfunded mandates, which this bill does, that those costs will be passed on down to the States, and there is only one way that you pay for those extra services and costs, and that would have to be through tax increases or cutting spending.

A lot of States are experiencing budget shortfalls. In my State of Oklahoma, we have cut back services in our State. So, if we have more unfunded mandates upon our State government, whether it is through the expansion of Medicaid or whether it is through the \$500 billion that is being proposed to cut seniors' and Medicare services or the taxes on medical devices or some of the services that will be eliminated, those costs get passed on down, and, ultimately, it will be the States that will be picking up those costs.

I appreciate what Congresswoman Foxx said about taking away the freedom of choice and liberties and our Nation. Many people I have talked to are concerned about where is our Nation going. We seem to be looking more like a European nation where we have huge democracies and so much debt being piled on our children and grandchildren. Frankly, people are worried about the future and about our security, our economic security and national security, especially at a time when we are experiencing a recession and people are concerned about keeping their jobs, supporting their families, and making house payments. They are very concerned.

I know some of the people I have been talking to, a lot of small business owners are very concerned about the proposed taxes that will be put onto the small businesses. We have actually had some congressional hearings with small business owners, and they have talked about how tough it is to get access to capital, to get loans, and how they have had to cut back employees and how revenues have dropped off. They tell us in congressional hearings if we pass another tax, as is being proposed, and it would affect small businesses, they will have to lay people off. And then if we have some type of government mandate to provide health insurance because that small business owner can't afford to provide that in-

surance to their small business employees, then they say they might just have to lay off people to provide for that insurance. Or if they had to pay that new tax, they will have to cut off some products or future plans to expand their businesses or drop the coverage they have and move toward the government plan, because they will pay the 8 percent tax. Getting back to your point as to eliminating some of our options in the private sector, if people start dropping the private sector insurance plans because they are seeing a shift to the government plans, then we will have less options.

As I have visited people in Oklahoma, they have asked me several questions. They want to know is this health care reform bill that Speaker PELOSI and HARRY REID in the Senate are proposing, is it going to lower costs. I can't say that it is going to lower cost. We are talking about almost a trillion dollars, debt and deficit. They were asking if their children will have more costs, more debt, more deficit piled on them, and I have to say I think the answer is yes.

They are asking will this health care reform proposal offer them more choices or will it take away some of their say and being able to choose what kind of health insurance they want for their family. My analysis is that it is going to take away choices for those families.

They are asking if it will make health insurance more affordable. Well, a lot of the estimates we are seeing, when you pile on over \$800 billion in new taxes, when you have mandates, when you have unfunded mandates, when you are rationing some of the care, it is not going to make health care more affordable.

And then they are asking if the Federal Government is going to be more involved in decisionmaking for their health care choices. And according to this bill, it looks like there will be a Federal bureaucrat basically between the patient and the doctor.

They want to know if this bill will lead to rationing of care. We have seen what has happened when other nations have implemented some type of government-run health care. It does lead to rationing of care. There are people who have died waiting to receive treatment. In Canada and Europe, it is well documented.

So all of those questions that are being asked of me by my constituents, I can't prove to them that it will lower cost, that it will not increase the deficit, and that it will give us more choices. It appears to me that this is going exactly the opposite.

I think what we have to tell the American people, there are lots of other health care pieces of legislation that we have been working on that would provide choice, that would lower costs, that would work on issues like portability, where you could keep your health insurance if you changed jobs, that would eliminate preexisting con-

ditions so you don't lose coverage, which would have medical malpractice reform which is estimated to save health insurance costs, which would allow us to be able to pool together and lower our costs for small businesses. There is some great language that would allow work on preventive care and more education, those types of things.

There are just all kinds of problems in this legislation that I think the American people are very concerned about, especially since we have been debating behind closed doors on this.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlelady, and the gentlelady is exactly right. Much of this has been done behind closed doors by our colleagues across the aisle, and many of the great ideas that have been brought forward that do stay focused on the patient have been brought forward by the Republicans in the House, whether it is the Republican Study Committee bill, MIKE ROGERS' bill, JOHN SHADEGG's bill, PAUL RYAN's bill, any of the number of amendments, over a hundred amendments that we on Energy and Commerce had when we were marking up the bill. So there are lots of good ideas on our side of the aisle.

At this time I want to recognize the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN) who has been so instrumental in helping to lead the debate on health care here in the House. I yield to her for her comments on the issue.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN). She has done an outstanding job leading this Special Order tonight, and I thank you for what you are doing.

We have so many women in our conference that wanted to be here tonight, and they can't all be here. The women in our conference understand one thing, and it is that women in the United States overwhelmingly make the health care decisions not only for their families, not only for their children, not only for their parents, but quite often women run a lot of the H.R., the human resources offices as well in business after business.

I think one thing that people in business are understanding is they are going to have fewer choices before them rather than more.

What we have seen from the bill that the Speaker of the House released last Thursday, on page 92, I believe, is that by the year 2013, no one will be able to purchase private insurance anymore. That's it. Now let that thought penetrate for a moment, Mr. Speaker.

□ 2045

If we have to be frozen in time and we can purchase no new private insurance after 2013, what will happen? What will happen to our choices? What will happen to the plans that we really have?

Well, it's interesting; a lot of people haven't been waiting around, they've been doing studies. One group called

The Levin Group showed that by looking at the health care that we have in front of us, in all likelihood about 114 million Americans will be thrown off the current health insurance plan they have and onto the government system, which means about 114 million Americans won't have the health care that the President said we would all be entitled to keep. And we remember what the President said, he said, If you like your current health care plan, no problem, you can keep it.

The only problem is, that's just not so. If you take 114 million Americans, throw them off the health care they already like, well, then they're stuck being in the government's plan. That means fewer choices. And that means the women of America don't get to make the choices anymore, it's government.

I think the thing that all American women really get out of this is that there is going to be an enormous hassle factor. There is a big hassle cost that's in all of this. That's what we women deal with, we deal with hassles—hassles with our jobs, hassles with the kids, hassles with trying to make the books balance, and now the biggest hassle of all, life and death decisions because if government literally controls the health care decisions from cradle to grave—because it would be every single American—that means the hassle cost goes way up. That's kind of the last thing we women need right now.

Women are tired, we're burdened, we have so many things on our plate. And I think especially women who are senior citizens, because they're watching this debate, and they get that \$500 billion is going to be cut out of Medicare. That's what we know—cut out, gone. So what that means is scarcity, and that means less. So we are all going to be paying a lot more, but we are all going to be getting a lot less. The simple fact is we can do so much better.

The Republican women here know that there are many positive solutions that we can do. We can really do a lot better. I will be real brief, and I will end with one positive solution we could take.

I am a former tax lawyer. Rather than government owning your health care and making all the decisions, or rather than your employer making the health care decisions for you, we change the tax code so that you, every American, gets to make your own health care decision. You own it, you make the decision, it's a wonderful thing. So you own it, you make the health care decision, and you get to take your own money, tax free, purchase the health care plan of your choice—you're not limited to what government says you buy, you buy any plan anywhere. Anything that we don't cover out of your own tax-free money you get to fully deduct on your income tax return. Have true lawsuit reform that costs billions of dollars. In fact, that covers 95 percent of Americans.

For the 5 percent who truly, through no fault of their own, can't afford health insurance, we can take care of them and we will take care of them, but we won't break the bank to do it.

We have great solutions. Let's try that rather than burdening the American people, and especially women who don't need those burdens. And I yield back to the very kind gentlelady who's doing an outstanding job tonight, Mrs. BLACKBURN of Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlelady from Minnesota for her good work on this issue and for being here with us tonight as we have brought forward the alternatives that are there, the good, solid, positive, free-market-oriented alternatives that are there from our conference and from the women in our conference. I thank everyone for joining us, and I yield back the balance of my time.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, we are here tonight to continue the discussion of health care.

Before I get started, I am a freshman here in Congress, and I am going to tell you a little about myself and why I'm here to discuss this.

I grew up in the rural south in a small, rural community. My father was a factory worker. I went to college, I went to medical school in Memphis, Tennessee, at the University of Tennessee—the real UT, I might add, for my Texas friends—and I spent 2 years in the military. I trained in an inner-city hospital, an urban hospital. I spent time in an infantry division in a medical battalion in Korea near the DMZ. I served in a military hospital, in a VA hospital. I practiced in Johnson City, Tennessee, an area in Appalachia in northeast Tennessee, and taught medical school with residents and interns. I really have had a varied experience, 31 years in private practice. My specialty was obstetrics and gynecology, where I delivered almost 5,000 babies. So I bring a rather unique experience to the House floor, and I am very privileged to be part of this debate.

I think before, as a physician, what I would try to do in any case that I saw was try to identify the problem. In America, we are trying to identify a problem with health care. And certainly, I think we have heard it on both sides of the aisle that we do need health care reform. I think the main reasons for that are two: One is costs—health care costs are escalating beyond the average person's ability to pay for the care—and access to adequate care for all of our citizens.

In this country, about 170 million of our citizens are covered by their job. Their health insurance is provided by

their job. And this started where your employer provided health insurance after World War II as an incentive to get workers to come work for a particular company. And it has, of course, grown since that time, and I think it has been a good thing for most people. We have been able to provide a level of care in this country that has been unequalled anywhere in the world.

What I have been able to see since 1970, when I graduated from medical school, were advances that I didn't even dream of. The one advance that we haven't seen come to fruition that I thought would be the cure for cancer. We haven't done that, but we have made tremendous strides in cancer and heart disease, diabetes, and so on.

So we have a cost issue, and we have an access issue. We have approximately 47 million of our citizens in this country that are not covered currently by health insurance. Who are they? Well, the Census Bureau believes that approximately 10 million of these folks are illegally in the country. We also believe that probably 9 million or so have incomes above \$75,000 a year and choose not to buy health insurance—their own choice. About 8 million people make between \$50,000 and \$75,000, and they may be families where this does stretch them, where they're a small business, and health insurance premiums—again, the cost factor has gotten so expensive that these folks can't afford it. So we really are looking at about 20 million people in this country who are working poor who don't have access to care.

How are we providing the care in this country now? Well, we're using private health insurance. Many people use their own employer, a small business, their health savings account. There are variations that people use to buy their health insurance.

We have the government now which provides about 46 cents of every dollar spent on health care with Medicare and Medicaid and the VA. So we have government taxpayers approaching 50 percent of the care, and then we have the rest, the 15 percent, who don't have coverage at this time.

So how do we go about keeping the cost down, quality high, and the access? We are joined here this evening—and I am going to stop, having framed the debate—with my good friend from Louisiana, Dr. JOHN FLEMING. And JOHN, I am going to turn this over to you to sort of continue this thought that I put forward.

Mr. FLEMING. I thank the gentleman, my colleague and good friend, Dr. ROE from the great State of Tennessee. I have visited there many times, the Smoky Mountains. Also, speaking of smoky, everything there is smoked, and it smells so delicious you want to eat bark off trees when you go through Tennessee. So it's a lovely State, and I always enjoy visiting it.

Like you, I grew up in a very middle class, working middle class environment. I had to work my way through

college. My mother became disabled when I was five, and then my father died just as I graduated from high school. I suddenly had the burden of helping out with the family, but also working my way through college and then ultimately medical school, which, with the help of the U.S. Navy, I was able to do that. I served 6 honorable years—some of the best years of my life, and my wife—in the Navy practicing medicine in such duty stations as Guam; Charleston, South Carolina; Oceanside, California; Camp Pendleton Marine Base.

It was, indeed, an honor to serve my country in that capacity as a physician. And then of course I've been in private practice since 1982, family medicine. I still see patients, I still provide care. I'm still dealing even day-to-day with some of the issues that all of us as physicians deal with.

Like you, in your many years of practice, I have carried a burden about what a wonderful contrast we have here. We have tremendous quality of care and delivery of care and the best of care and the best of technology, but yet some people do have access problems. There is no question about it; that needs to be solved.

I ran on a reform campaign, health care reform. I wanted reform, I came here to reform, but you know what I found when I got here is really anything but reform. What I'm seeing is a Congress that has taken a sudden left turn towards socialism to dismantle what is the best health care system in the world and remake it into the same image as Cuba, North Korea, Soviet Union, the U.K., Canada. Even some of the States like your own, Tennessee, who have experimented with socialized medicine and government takeover of medicine, have failed. I have actually asked, I have been to venues and asked, please, show me one example where government-run health care has ever been successful, and I have yet to find one single example of that.

So, like you, I am very interested in health care reform that is true reform, that is common sense, that makes the cost go down—bend the cost curve down, that's the common theme today. And there are so many ways that I'm sure we will get into as we go forward that we can do that. And I thank the gentleman for recognizing me.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. We have also been joined this evening by our colleague from Wyoming, CYNTHIA LUMMIS. We appreciate you being here, and I would like to now yield time to you.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Well, I thank the gentleman from Tennessee, who has tremendous experience with government-run health care in the State of Tennessee. And after he saw the 1,990-page bill that we received last week and saw how much government intervention is involved through that bill, how many unfunded mandates are being passed onto the States, how many government bureaucracies are created, how many

times the word "shall" appears in that bill, this is truly transformational.

Some of the Members of our caucus have said that this is the most significant debate that they have ever been involved in. So for those of us who are freshmen and did come here to reduce the size of State government, or to reduce spending, or to, as the gentleman from Louisiana said, reform health care, we are seeing things that we hoped would not be a consequence, and that being more government intervention, more spending, more involvement in our lives.

And so we are here to protect people from more government intervention and to protect the relationships that you have with your doctor, with your local community hospital, with your health care provider so you all can make decisions regarding your own lives and your own quality of treatment and the efforts that you will make to enjoy the type of health care and quality of life that you hope to have in your communities. And that is reflected in this recent survey of women. Sixty-four percent of American women would rather have private health insurance than a government-run health insurance plan. Sixty-six percent describe their health insurance as excellent or good. Seventy-four percent describe their health care as excellent or good. Seventy-five percent want few to no changes made in their own health care.

We all know that there needs to be some reform. The cost is too high, and in some areas access is limited. And certainly with regard to Medicare, in rural areas hospitals and doctors are not reimbursed for the full cost of providing the services they provide. In my home State of Wyoming, in fact, the hospital in Casper, Wyoming, has said they are only reimbursed for about one-third of the actual cost of providing care to a Medicare patient.

□ 2100

Now, some doctors who are reimbursed at these very low levels have decided not to take Medicare patients anymore. So, when things like that happen, we really are denying access to care by having a government-run program.

Not only that—and this is one of my greatest concerns—it's what we are giving up by taking on a government-run program. Let's compare ourselves to countries that have government-run programs. Let's look specifically at cancer.

For men in the U.S., survival rates exceed 60 percent and also for women. In fact, two-thirds of women will survive. Spain, Italy, and the United Kingdom are all significantly below the United States in terms of survival rates. One of the reasons for that is, when diagnosis occurs in the United States, treatment follows much more quickly than in some of these countries. So, if you are rationing care, that is a consequence. You don't have

the same survival rates that we do in the United States.

Take, for example, my own sister-in-law. She was diagnosed with a very aggressive form of breast cancer on her annual mammogram. She had no symptoms. She had none of the usual markers or factors which would indicate she had a risk of an aggressive breast cancer. Yet she was diagnosed based on her annual mammogram. She was in surgery in the same month that she was diagnosed, and she then began a regimen of both radiation and chemotherapy. Shortly thereafter, it saved her life.

So she falls into that category of two-thirds of American women who are surviving cancer. In fact, with breast cancer, it's a very significant number—the difference between survivability in the United States versus survivability in European countries—and that's because health care is rationed. This is a quote by the chief justice on the Canadian Supreme Court: access to a waiting list is not access to health care.

In this bill, we have to have assurance that we're not going to be on a waiting list. Quite frankly, we don't have that at all. In fact, based on what I've read in this 1,990-page bill and based on what I've been told by my colleague, the gentleman from Tennessee who is leading this discussion tonight, in fact, we will have rationing. The cost will be tremendous, and the taxes that will be imposed on so many of us as a result will be exorbitant.

So it sounds to me like health care reform, in the style of the bill that was introduced last week, includes higher taxes, penalties, less choice, more government, more costs to States, more costs to individuals, more costs to small business, and no guarantee of an improvement in access, in quality or in the ability to craft a plan of treatment between you and your physician or to seek a second or third opinion in the event you feel it's necessary for you, for your family, for your parents or for your children.

This is not health care reform as was envisioned by my colleagues who are here tonight, the gentleman from Louisiana and the gentleman from Tennessee.

Thank you kindly for allowing me to join you.

I yield back.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Thank you, the gentlewoman from Wyoming. Excellent comments.

Health care decisions should always be made between patients, their families and their physicians, not the insurance companies and not the Federal Government. I believe that, and I have used that in my practice for many years. It's one of the reasons I was a very successful practitioner. I knew who I worked for—my patients—and I looked after their benefit.

Now, one of the things I want you to think about in this bill—and this is the bill here. It's H.R. 3962. They've changed the number because H.R. 3200

has become so tainted now. It's two parts. As the gentlewoman pointed out, it's 1,990-pages long. I've only been through the first 1,000 or so pages, and it's going to take me a few more wakeful nights to go through it, but I will. In the Senate's Baucus plan, for instance, it's an alleged 1,500-page bill. It gets you to 91 percent coverage.

You can do two things on one page and get to 91 percent coverage, which is to allow young people who have graduated from high school or from college and who are not yet covered by insurance plans at their work or who can't afford it to stay on their parents' plans until they're 26 years old. You can cover 7 million young people by doing that.

Number two, you can sign up the people who are currently eligible for government programs, which would be SCHIP and Medicaid, and you would then be at 91 percent without all the other bureaucratic morass that this bill goes through.

I want to make this point tonight: this bill right here is almost incomprehensible when you read it, because, when you do read it, you have to refer to the IRS code, to HHS, to Medicare, and so on. It's just almost incomprehensible. So I'm going to go over about four or five things which, I think, could be done very simply—and I want the gentleman from Louisiana to step in—which will allow those health care decisions to be made by families.

Number one, one of the big arguments we hear today, or issues which we deal with, is preexisting conditions, and they're real. I've dealt with patients who've had breast cancer who then, as individuals, could not be insured. Well, in the group market, in large groups, that's not a problem because you just accept those increased risks and spread those risks among large groups of people.

When I was mayor of the city of Johnson City, we had 1,500 people, plus their families, with plans—teachers and employees of the city—and we were able to spread risk and to buy reinsurance for high-risk patients, but an individual has a real problem. I, as an individual, going in with a problem am not insurable.

Well, how do you do that, how do you make that same group market available for an individual that you have for large businesses?

Well, you eliminate State lines. You take the State lines out, and you allow association health plans to be formed, and then the individual market becomes a very large group market. Costs go down, and the preexisting condition problem goes away.

Number two, I think that a person shouldn't be bankrupted if a person gets ill. I think, if you become ill through no fault of your own, you shouldn't go into bankruptcy. I think that's a fairly simple thing.

What are you going to do for low-income people who can't afford these things? Well, you can have subsidies or

tax credits so that people in this income bracket can also join health plans and can share their risks.

I've never understood why the government treats our patients on Medicaid differently than they do from Medicare patients. They're not treated as well, I don't think, because of the payment differences, but they shouldn't be. They should be allowed to take those dollars as a credit that are spent on Medicaid, and they should be allowed to go into an association health plan and also spread those risks. So those are a few little things.

Lastly—and I think it's barely mentioned in this 2,000-page bill—we talked at the beginning of this hour about costs and about how we control costs. You will never ever control the costs of health care unless you begin to do something with tort reform, or with malpractice reform, because, as a physician, if I don't order a test—if I have a patient come to the emergency room and if I don't get a CT scan and if something by chance happens to that patient, then I'm going to be liable for that problem. If I order the test and if there is nothing wrong, there is no penalty to me. So we have to change that. Let me just explain a couple of things that helped me understand this.

We have a terrible tort system in this country. The reason it's terrible is we have no way to compensate injured people. When someone does have an injury due to malpractice, we have no way to compensate him.

In 1975 in the State of Tennessee, we started a malpractice company called the State Volunteer Mutual Insurance Company. Since the inception of that company, over half the premium dollars have gone to attorneys. Now, these are defense attorneys and plaintiff attorneys, but less than 40 cents on the dollar have actually gone to injured people. All the thousands and hundreds of thousands of dollars I have paid in over these years have not gone to compensate injured people. So that's something which, I think, is not in this bill. Until you address that, you're never going to address the ever-escalating costs.

What do you think about it, JOHN?

Mr. FLEMING. Well, I quite agree, with you, Dr. ROE.

I would like at this moment—and I think it would be a fitting time for this—to quote an excerpt from *The Wall Street Journal*, today's edition, where there's an editorial, probably the best editorial I've ever read.

For those of you who are watching tonight, I would strongly recommend that you read a copy of, again, today's *Wall Street Journal* editorial. I'm going to read just an excerpt. Here is what it says. Again, these are financial experts who are writing this. This is probably the widest read newspaper in the country, period, even more than *USA Today*, and they're certainly the most intelligent and best-trained financial people.

It says: Speaker PELOSI has reportedly told fellow Democrats that she is

prepared to lose seats in 2010 if that's what it takes to pass it.

This is obviously suggesting that there are a lot of people out there who don't like this, and she's bound and determined to have this as her legacy.

ObamaCare, as it says—I call it PelosiCare—and little wonder. The health bill she unwrapped last Thursday, which President Obama hailed as a critical milestone, may well be the worst piece of post-New Deal legislation ever introduced. In a rational political world, this 1,990-page runaway train would have been derailed months ago.

That's quite true. Not one single Republican at any point has supported this bill, and many Democrats have not supported it.

With spending and debt already at record peacetime levels, the bill creates a new and probably unrepealable middle class entitlement that is designed to expand over time.

Again, I emphasize "unrepealable." Once this thing gets into law, like so many things, there is no way we can get rid of it. It will be with us forever.

Taxes will need to rise precipitously. Even as ObamaCare so dramatically expands the government control of health care, eventually all medicine will be rationed via politics.

So I think that's very critical. First of all, it's one party—and one party only—that wants to force this. Really, it's even less than that. Just the leadership of one party wants to force this takeover of one-sixth of the American economy forever and wants to put it under government control forever, controlling your life from day to day. For what gain? Dr. ROE just pointed out that we could easily cover the same number of additional people with much less cost and with much less effort.

What it does is it leads to rationing. It leads to long lines. I think, certainly, what has been said about justice is true about health care: health care delayed is health care denied.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Will the gentleman yield for a moment?

Mr. FLEMING. Yes, I would be happy to.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I just want to give a brief example.

I was home this past week, and I spoke to one of my partners, Dr. Lewis. Dr. Lewis had a patient who had a fertility problem, which he helped her with. She was able to become pregnant, but miscarried. She lost her baby. Her husband worked for the State Department and was sent to England. Apparently, when the American employees are sent to England, they get private insurance. Well, she wanted to move on with her fertility evaluation, so she first had to go through the public system before she could access the private system in England. She went there and she didn't see the doctor. She saw a nurse.

The nurse said, Well, you need to see the doctor for your fertility problem. That will be a year.

She was going to have to wait a year to see the fertility doctor. Well, she had a visit planned back home in a few weeks; and while she was home, she called her doctor, Dr. Lewis, who got her into the office in 1 week. He got her back on her treatment, and she is now back in England. Hopefully, it will be successful.

Those are the kinds of delays that you're going to see. This is just one example. I could spend the rest of the night giving these examples.

Dr. Fleming, I want to get into the cost because that's something that isn't talked about in this CBO report. Now, the CBO report we got said this is going to be deficit-neutral. Well, I want to go back through history a little bit. Let's look at the history of Medicare, of Medicaid, of the TennCare, and of the Massachusetts plan. I'll just briefly and quickly go through them.

In 1965, when Medicare was passed, it was passed as a plan that was going to be about a \$3 billion to \$4 billion plan. The CBO estimate was that, in 25 years, by 1990, this would be a \$15 billion plan. Fast forward to 1990. This was a \$90 billion plan. They missed it just a tad there. Today, it's over a \$400 billion plan. It's about \$428 billion.

The Medicaid program has gone up 37 times since its inception.

The Massachusetts plan had a noble goal, which was to try to cover as many of its citizens as possible. That's absolutely what we should try to do in an affordable way. In Massachusetts now, they're at around 97 percent coverage.

□ 2115

Government spending on health care is up 70 percent since 2006. Between then and 2009, that's just 36 short months. In TennCare—and we will go into that a little bit more. The reason it's important to go into TennCare and what's happening in Massachusetts is because that's basically what the basis of a lot of this plan is that we are debating tonight.

TennCare, which started in 1993 with a \$2.6 billion Medicaid plan, by 2004, just 10 years later, 11 years later, it was at 7.5 billion and would go to 8.5 billion in 11 years, which almost bankrupted our State. Today our State is in such dire financial—and this is with the stimulus money that came in—that we can no longer add any further children to the State Children's Health Insurance Plan.

I got a letter from Governor Phil Bredesen, who is a Democrat, who is a health care expert, I might add, and has done a very fine job in Tennessee managing this along with the Republican legislature. They have worked together to try to control these costs. What the Governor said is that in the next 5 years this will add \$735 million, which we do not have. If certain other stipulations are placed on this plan, it could be in the billions of dollars. We have seen every single government

plan that's out there that didn't meet these cost expectations, and this one won't either.

For our seniors, I know they get it, but I want you to listen, and you can do the math. This plan, according to CBO, is going to be financed by taking \$400 to \$500 billion out of an underfunded Medicare plan that's going broke by 2017. That's the last number that I saw. That it would be upside down, more money going out than coming in.

We are going to take \$400 to \$500 billion out of that plan. We are then going to add between 3 and 3.5 million seniors, our baby boomers that are hitting Medicare age, beginning in 2011. That will be between 30 and 35 million new recipients in the next 10 years.

Then in 2 years, in 2011, we are going to cut provider pay by as much as 25 percent. We are going to now add 30 to 35 million more people. We are going to cut \$400 to \$500 billion and cut our providers. Let me tell what you that adds up to. They get it. I was home this weekend and spoke to many. Our seniors are genuinely worried.

They know, number one, when you do that, you are going to cut access, because when you cut that much money out, you are going to have a very difficult time getting to your doctor. If you can't get to your provider, you are going to cut quality. Number three, to get there, you are finally going to increase your own costs because you are going to have to pay more for the care you are getting; without a doubt, you are.

We have seen it in our State, as I said. We will go into it in more detail, but, Dr. FLEMING, I would like to hear your comments about financing this.

Mr. FLEMING. One thing that I think can be said about this bill that's pretty obvious, and that is by virtue of a lot that you have said tonight, Dr. ROE, is that everyone will see costs go up. There is individual mandates, so even individuals who don't sign up for insurance will pay 2.5 percent taxes, which they don't have to pay. That's the middle class, even lower socioeconomic class taxation.

There will be taxation on health savings accounts that does not exist today. Taxpayers will see their taxes increase. An employer will see their net tax go from 35 percent marginal rate today to 39 when the Bush tax cuts expire. Then another 5 percent above that, they will get to marginal rates of 45 percent, which most of those higher-income individuals in that range are small business owners, which means that they will have to reduce other benefits or reduce pay or reduce number of employees. That's all there flat is to it. There are only so many places you can cut.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Have you had any of your constituent businesspeople come to you and say, if this plan passes as they understand it, they are out? Their business is closed? I have.

Mr. FLEMING. I have. I have had a number of them say that. They have

done the math. They cannot figure out where they are going to get the extra 5, 10, 15 percent. I mean, most businesses today operate on a margin of around 5 percent of gross income. Well, when you add overhead of another 15 percent, that means you are upside down by 10 percent. The bottom line is that everybody, not just the high-income people, everybody is going to be paying more in either taxes or premiums or both. Everybody is going to be getting less access to care. Yes, less access to care.

Again, just quickly going back to Canada, remember in Canada, care is free for everybody. It's universal, 100 percent. Well, only one out of six people have a family doctor in Canada. They actually have a lottery system. Yes, it's 100 percent universal. Unfortunately, you can't get in the system. They close hospitals down.

Even Cuba claims to have universal health care and medicine is free. The only problem is they've got no medicine. So what good is free when it isn't available? That is the direction that we are taking here if we go off this way.

Just to kind of summarize my comments on this, that is that every health care model in the world looks at two possibilities, two options to save money. One is to bring it down to the unit between the doctor and the patient and give them both a stake in what the total cost is, not necessarily pay completely out of pocket but at least pay a portion of it, and that's where health savings accounts make savvy consumers out of patients. Either that, in which they have a stake in controlling costs, or you have a giant bureaucracy such as in Canada and the UK, in which case you have to have long lines and rationing. It's one way or the other.

America, you are going to have to decide what you want. Today, we don't have the ideal thing. We need to improve the system we have. But if we go with the public option, which will lead to single payer, then we are going to go down the road of rationing and long lines. There is no doubt about that. And even Members of the other side of the aisle said that's where they want to be.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I think one of the things I want to talk about now—and we have been joined here by Dr. BURGESS, our good friend from Texas—I think, where is the money coming from to pay for this? I think at the end of the day, when a patient comes to me in my office and sees me, am I going to be able to deliver better care when we pass this in the House, if the House does pass this 2,000-page bill? The answer is no. Will access go down? I believe it will. Will costs go up? I believe they will.

You mentioned about the individual mandate. So people understand what that is, you are a person working out there as a painter or you work in a small business or whatever and you don't have health insurance. You choose not to buy it if it's offered at

your group, or you just choose not to. You will pay 2.5 percent of your total income into this exchange as a penalty.

Well, what's happened in Massachusetts? Let me sort of go over that for just a moment. They have a mandate. That experiment is being tried right now in the State of Massachusetts.

The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care plan found from April of 2008 until March of 2009, 1 year, they found that 40 percent of their new enrollees kept their insurance for only 5 months. During that 5-month period of time, the average payment was \$2,400 a month; whereas, the average person who just had part of their plan was \$350 a month. People were waiting because you don't have any—in Massachusetts, you cannot be denied coverage, and you get a community rating, meaning that everyone pays the same rate. What people are doing is they are waiting until they get sick, at least in this Harvard Pilgrim plan. Then when they get well, they drop their insurance and pay the 2.5 percent penalty.

The other is an 8 percent penalty on business, which is a payroll tax. Basically, a business will pay 8 percent of its payroll into this exchange or into the government. Well, if you are paying 10 or 12 percent now, then what you are going to do is you are going to drop that if you can and get into the public option.

Well, I started thinking about this the other night. It's the first time before, in my business, in my medical practice, I negotiated the health insurance policy every year as a separate cost than payroll. Now what's going to happen is your health care costs are tied directly to the payroll, meaning that if you give your employees a raise, you have also just raised your health care premiums. You put those linked together for the first time, and I think that's not good for the person out there working.

I am going to yield now to my good friend, Dr. BURGESS from Texas. Thank you for joining us, and we have been joined also this evening by Dr. CASSIDY from Louisiana.

Dr. BURGESS.

Mr. BURGESS. I thank the gentleman from Tennessee for yielding.

I was watching the events of this Special Order hour as you all were discussing it earlier. I felt like I needed to come over and talk for just a minute about words we heard on the floor of this House the middle of September that this bill could be passed, and it would be entirely paid for, not one dime would be added to the deficit.

The American people look at this, whatever the figure is, 890 billion, 1.055 trillion, 1.4 trillion, whatever the number is, and they know a statement that it will not add one dime to the deficit is, on its face, preposterous. No one believes that. Yet if we are asking people to believe that statement, what else is hidden in this bill that we are not telling you, because again, clearly, the American people do not believe us on that.

The gentleman talked about how we pay for it. Some significant cuts to the Medicare program in order to fund a new entitlement; a lot of people have difficulty with that.

But what about the taxes? What about the promise that there will be no taxes on individuals in the middle class, no taxes on individuals who earn less than \$250,000 a year? And yet, we are going to put a tax on so-called Cadillac insurance premiums. We are going to put a tax on medical devices.

I did a press event this morning at a library where I distributed copies of the bill for people who wanted to read the bill. A woman said, Well, then on my \$1,000 insulin pump, am I going to have to pay a 15 percent tax? I said, Well, at some point someone will. She said, Well, how will that be assessed? I said, My understanding is it will be like a sales tax or value added tax. She did some quick math and said, That's a lot of money to add to my already stressed budget trying to cover my medical expenses, because I do have diabetes.

Ten percent of people earning under \$50,000 a year, 10 percent of the taxes will be paid by people who earn under \$50,000 a year. Ninety percent of the taxes are going to be paid by people who earn under \$240,000 a year. Clearly, this is a tax on the middle class. That is how it's going to be paid for.

I did have some people ask me, Well, if the benefits don't kick in for 4 years, is there perhaps not a way to, if this passes, if no one can stop this and the Speaker gets her way and this bill passes on Thursday or Friday or Saturday, what about, then, since the benefits don't kick in for a while, maybe we can dial it back over the next several years. My concern there is if we already start collecting the taxes for a benefit that is to occur in the future, it may be very, very difficult to indeed dial back the portion of this bill if we are going to—the sensible thing to do would be to hit the pause button, the reset button. Let's sit down and figure out really what the American people want us to do.

We heard participatory democracy all the way through the month of August. I know. I was on a listening tour of sorts through my town halls in my district. Some people were quite vociferous about what they felt about this bill, both pro and con. But I felt that, after listening to her this summer, that we would come back here to Congress and perhaps sit down and try to rethink where we were. It was almost as if the Democratic leadership said that didn't happen, it didn't matter. It was some sort of national fugue state. This was all an illusion this August. People really weren't upset with the bill. They just wanted it so badly that you misinterpreted their passion because they want the government to control. They want the government to take over the health care system in this country.

One of the other things, and I don't think we can underestimate this, is the

effect that this bill will have on jobs and job creation. More people are concerned about jobs in this country than they are about health care right now by a factor of 4 to 1. We are going to go over 10 percent, in all likelihood, on Friday when the jobs report comes up from the Department of Labor, will be the first double-digit unemployment in this country in decades.

People are concerned about jobs; yet, at the same time, our small business people, the people that we, as politicians, say they are the backbone of the economy of America, they are the engine that drives economic growth, they are scared to death of what we are going to do to them in the coming months. They are scared of this health care bill. They are scared of an 8 percent payroll tax that may be levied upon them. They are scared of what we are going to do in cap-and-trade, and they are scared of what we are going to do in financial regulation, not to mention the fact that there are significant tax increases just around the corner when the tax laws of 2001 and 2003 expire.

This is a debate that we must keep at a fever pitch all week. This is the opportunity. Now is the time to aggressively document and talk about what is in this bill. Doesn't really matter so much about what I think, what I would do if I was in charge. Right now, the task before us is to lay out to the American people what is in this bill, let them see for themselves whether they like it or not. Then, Madam Speaker, the American people need to tell us.

Quite honestly they will have a chance on Thursday at noon, the west front of the Capitol, the people will have an opportunity to speak up about this bill.

□ 2130

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Dr. BURGESS, thank you for your comments. Also, just so people understand, it is not just an insulin pop. It is any medical device that we are talking about. It could be a wheelchair; it could be a prosthetic device, if you have a leg that is a prosthetic device; if you have stents in your heart or hip replacements. And who is going to pay that? The consumer is going to pay that, we know that, the person that is getting that device. What we don't want to see is this unbelievable amount of innovation that has occurred.

Dr. BURGESS, what comes to mind for me is the equipment we use for a laparoscopically assisted hysterectomy. When we first started, those took us 5 to 6 hours because we didn't have the equipment to do it with. Now it is a 1-hour procedure because of the new equipment that is there. Patients have benefited tremendously from this. Did it cost money to do this? Yes, it did. But I look at the advantages for the patient. I don't want to see that innovation brought to a halt, and I fear it will be.

Mr. BURGESS. Well, if the gentleman will yield for a moment on that point, minimally invasive surgery has changed the face of operations like hysterectomy operations, like a cholecystectomy, removal of the gall bladder. I am sure you remember, I remember when I was in medical school and a resident, this large incision that would go underneath the person's rib cage. They would be in the hospital 7 days; not because their gall bladder surgery was that traumatic, it was the incision that was traumatic.

Now it can be done laparoscopically through two or three 1-centimeter incisions. That patient is out of the hospital the next day, or sometimes even the same day if it is done in a surgery center, and that has vastly decreased the cost of hospitalization for that procedure and that has vastly decreased the cost of the time lost from work for people in recovery for operations like gall bladder removal and hysterectomy.

I yield back.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I thank the gentleman.

We have been joined by Dr. CASSIDY from Louisiana. I yield to Dr. CASSIDY. We thank you for being here this evening.

Mr. CASSIDY. You know, I agree with almost everything Congressman BURGESS said, except for one thing, in that I do think it is important to discuss our Republican alternatives, because, frankly, part of the rationale, the steamroll we are on, is there is no other option. We have, as the President has said, the cost of doing nothing, the costs will double over the next 10 years, and that is an inflation rate of about 7 percent if it compounds.

Well, as it turns out, since the cost according to the Congressional Budget Office of the reforms before us—the inflation rate is 8 percent per year—under the reform proposals before us, costs more than double in 10 years. At a minimum, reform should not be more costly than the status quo.

That said, I think it is important for us to discuss alternatives. I think we can all agree on the goals. We need to control costs. I am with the President on this. If we cannot control costs, we cannot expand access to quality care.

Now, as it turns out, we three are physicians. We know that if the patient is in the middle of the process, then costs are controlled. There is a report by McKinsey & Company and it talks about the three imperatives for health care reform, and they are to decrease the administrative costs—so much money goes to administration; to have transparency, so that when a patient goes in for her knee surgery, she knows before the surgery how much it will cost her, not find out a month later; and, lastly, incentivize healthy lifestyles. So in a patient-centered plan we should lower administrative costs, increase transparency, and incentivize healthy lifestyles.

So I would like to compare it to the 2,000-page, \$1 trillion, 20-pound bill.

Now, does it lower administrative costs? You almost have to laugh, because it creates 111 new bureaucracies, boards, commissions. You name it, it clearly expands administrative costs.

Does it incentivize healthy lifestyles? I actually read that provision today, and it gives grants to small businesses that come up with innovative ways in which you can make employees healthier. But it is very vague and very gauzy. And I kept thinking of that small businesswoman who is really struggling to make ends meet, trying not to lay people off. What is the likelihood that she is going to take 2 hours a day to write a grant application to submit to the Federal Government on the hope they will give her \$150 per employee, which is the maximum allowed, in order for her to come up with a wellness program? That is something written by a Washington bureaucrat, not by someone who knows the travails of a small business person.

Lastly, transparency. Frankly, I just find it unbelievable that a bill that creates 111 boards and commissions will be transparent.

That said, what are the alternatives? I think we would all agree from our own experience, patient-centered care can work. For example, you have got great anecdotes about health savings accounts. Congressman FLEMING, who just left, I love his story about a health savings account.

For those who don't know what they are, with traditional insurance policies, a family of four, you put up \$12,000 a year. If you use the insurance, you may get some of your money back, but at the end of the year it is gone, and you put up another \$12,000 for the next year.

With a health savings account, you sluice off some of that money and you put it into a banking account, and that banking account is yours and you can spend it on the things which you choose. But at the end of the year, if you haven't spent it, you keep it.

With the traditional policy, you start over. With the health savings account, you conserve that money and it is there for you the next year. It rolls over, and it is that much less you have to put forward. It changes the psychology. We know that.

But just to explain it, in a patient-centered account, a patient was telling me, he goes to a doctor. The doctor writes him a prescription, \$159. He says, doctor, you have given this to me before. It is \$159. Listen, I have got a health savings account. Can you write me something cheaper? He goes, oh, I am sorry. He writes him a \$20 generic, so the system just saved \$139.

I actually think the power of millions of individuals making decisions at \$139 a decision has more ability to control costs than 111 boards and commissions in Washington, D.C., that are attempting to control health care in all the small towns across the United States.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. If the gentleman will yield for a moment, you

are absolutely dead right on this. In my district, I visited four businesses, one is the City of Johnson City, Tennessee, where I was mayor. Another is Holston Munitions, or BAE Corporation.

They have instituted a wellness program that in the last 5 years they have not had a premium increase. What they have done is they have basically incentivized behavior, for instance, smoking.

If you smoke, and one of my good friends had a patient come to him the other day, and he said last spring, and this was in June, she said I have to quit smoking by the first of July. He thought, that is pretty good. I am glad to hear that. They've been trying to get you to quit for several years. But why are you going to quit? She says well, my insurance changes and they are going to penalize me if I smoke. It is going to cost me money.

So, if you don't smoke, or you get your hemoglobin A1C, which is the way we monitor your sugar and diabetes, to get your hemoglobin A1C down, you lose weight, they will pay you for that. So you can earn the money back. And they have done that with their wellness program and been wildly successful.

To tag-team into your health savings account, just me personally in 2 years, and people will say that, well, you can't use that in Medicaid or you can't use that, I absolutely disagree with that. In our own medical practice, of the 294 people that get insurance through our practice, 84 percent use a health savings account. These are the folks that check you in at the front and draw the blood and the nurses that assist us and so forth. So it works very well for everybody. We all respond.

Mr. CASSIDY. If the gentleman will yield for just a second, this bill specifically excludes small businesses from doing what you described as a wellness program. That effective program is specifically excluded. So the patient-centered program which was so successful in Johnson City is not allowed in that 2,000-page bill.

Mr. BURGESS. If the gentleman would yield, you bring up a great point about tobacco. One of the problems with this bill is you are not allowed to rate on tobacco use. In fact, there will be only 2 ratings bands, based on age.

Health savings accounts—I am a big believer. I have had a medical savings account since 1996. I skipped for a few years when I came up here, and we didn't have them available. Now I have it established again, and it is working very, very well. But the problem is, that will not be a qualified plan. It will not meet the minimum benefit standards under the new health care commissar that is going to be developed by this bill that we have before us. So the very thing that may lead to a reduction in costs, we are not going to be allowed to have.

Now, since the gentleman disagreed with me, I do feel obligated to point

out that it is not that Republicans don't have alternatives or shouldn't have alternatives. I individually have 20 bills dealing with health care under my name and have cosponsored at least 30 additional bills. There are a plethora of bills out there with Republican names that do everything from fix the problems that doctors have with the sustainable growth rate formula in Medicare to liability reform. They are not part of this bill. They are not part of the discussion this week. What is the discussion this week is that monstrosity behind the gentleman.

It is our obligation, it is our obligation to our patients and to our profession to kill this bill so we can then begin to talk about some of the alternatives that are rational, because it makes no sense to preclude a wellness program simply because it doesn't fit into some chairman's idea of what a health care bill should look like, some chairman who might have been here since 1974, by the way.

That is the problem we have before us this week, is this bill. After we get rid of this bill, after we get past this bill, yes, we can begin to talk about those things to provide benefit to the American people, help to the American people who actually need it.

You said it earlier in this hour. It is that 8 to 10 million people that have a preexisting condition. If we could make their problem go away, and we can, the Congressional Budget Office estimates between \$8 billion and \$20 billion over 10 years. That is a far cry from \$1 trillion. We could make that problem go away with State reinsurance programs and State high-risk pools. We have that power within our hands. Some people may argue that constitutionally we don't have that power, but it would be a darn sight better than what we are talking about doing tonight.

Mandates have no place in a free society. There was no mandate that required me to buy an iPod, yet everyone in the country has an iPod or iPhone today because it is a great product, and everyone wants one. That is what we should be looking at in our insurance policies, how to create products that people actually want, not making someone take a policy that the insurance company says I can make money selling. That is where we will go with mandates.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Reclaiming my time, I would also say it takes away personal freedom to decide what is best for your family. For instance, in my family now we don't need fertility evaluations that maybe other families do need. They should be able to purchase those if they need to.

I want the viewing public tonight to take a peak at H.R. 3962, which is a new name for H.R. 3200. I would encourage you to begin to read this. It will take some time. But the American people did read H.R. 3200. They actually did. I had hundreds that came to me at town halls that printed it off the Internet and read it. It is probably just out on the Net.

It is amazingly complex, and the devil is in the details. When you start reading the details, and I did begin the details today, that is where you begin to see what you lose in this.

Mr. CASSIDY. If the gentleman would yield, I was a little late coming over here because we were having a telephone town hall. For the folks who are watching, that is where we from Washington have a phone call that goes out to thousands of people in our district, and we have a telephone town hall.

There was a woman that got on and she just nailed it. You pointed out, we have a 2,000-page, \$1 trillion bill that was introduced last Thursday that we are going to vote on this coming Friday that is going to remake 17 percent of our gross domestic product, drastically affecting the health care for us all.

If it seems kinds of crazy that we would do that, this woman calls in, Rebecca, and I happen to know the family, I didn't realize it was from her family, and they are very bright people, very hardworking, good people.

So here is kind of her quote. She went to the Kaiser Family Foundation site to determine what her costs would be under the bills before Congress, and she figured out that her family's costs would double.

She says a small business is going to do a cost-benefit analysis, and they are just going to dump patients upon the public option because, why shouldn't they? Now, she says, I am quoting her, it seems like the people writing this are obtuse. They are not writing this for the middle class of the Nation. It is not centered on the patient. It feels rushed. It doesn't make sense; 2,000 pages, one week to digest it. It feels rushed.

She finishes up by saying, for all the possible plans, our premiums will double. It is very expensive. You can't get ahead. The more productive a citizen you try to become, it is like you take one step forward and go two steps back.

This is a bill which is two steps back.

Mr. BURGESS. If the gentleman would yield on one point, it is hard to see if we make health care more expensive that we are going to make it more affordable.

I yield back my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I think, in summary, in closing up this evening, what we have got this week is a discussion, I think the single biggest social discussion we have had in this Nation in 50 years, since Medicare. The challenge is how do we make health care affordable, and how do we provide it for the citizens now who don't have it?

I think, as Dr. BURGESS stated just a moment ago, that right now, the bill before us, they are not our solutions. We keep hearing there are no Republican solutions. There absolutely are. They are not on the table. They are not being discussed. This bill right here, H.R. 3962, all 1,990 pages, that is what

we are discussing this week, and, as Dr. FLEMING said, we are probably going to vote on this week.

So I think that this needs to be looked at as quickly as we can by the American people to try to peel this onion back, so to say, and look at what's there. I appreciate my colleagues being here tonight, and we'll be here throughout this week to further discuss this bill and what is in this bill.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. ABERCROMBIE (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and November 3.

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and November 3.

Mr. DEFAZIO (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of travel difficulties.

Mr. LUCAS (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of family illness.

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today, November 3 and 4 on account of the birth of a child.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCNERNEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BURTON of Indiana) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, November 6 and 9.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, November 6 and 9.

Ms. FOXX, for 5 minutes, today, November 3, 4, 5, 6 and 9.

Mr. MCHENRY, for 5 minutes, today, November 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, for 5 minutes, November 3.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, for 5 minutes, November 3, 4 and 5.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, November 6.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2996. An act making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3606. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to make a technical correction

to an amendment made by the Credit CARD Act of 2009.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced her signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1929. To provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, November 3, 2009, at 8 a.m., for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of Rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4394. A letter from the Auditor, District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of the report entitled, "Auditor's Certification Review of the Accuracy of Initiatives and Key Performance Indicators Set Forth in the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs Fiscal Year 2008 Performance Accountability Report", pursuant to D.C. Code section 47-117(d); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4395. A letter from the Auditor, District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of the report entitled, "Audit of the Office of the People's Counsel Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2004", pursuant to D.C. Code section 47-117(d); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4396. A letter from the Auditor, District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of the report entitled, "Auditor's Review of Fiscal Oversight of the 2008 Summer Youth Employment Program", pursuant to D.C. Code section 47-117(d); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4397. A letter from the Auditor, District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of the report entitled, "Audit of the Office of the People's Counsel Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2003", pursuant to D.C. Code section 47-117(d); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4398. A letter from the Auditor, District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of the report entitled, "Auditor's Certification Review of the Office of the State Superintendent of Education", pursuant to D.C. Code section 47-117(d); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4399. A letter from the Auditor, District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of the report entitled, "Audit of the Public Service Commission Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2005", pursuant to D.C. Code section 47-117(d); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4400. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Tampa Bay, FL [COTP Sector St. Petersburg, FL 07-216] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received

October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4401. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Coast Guard Live Fire Exercise, Gulf of Mexico, FL [COTP Sector St. Petersburg, FL 07-206] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4402. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Garrison Channel, Florida [COTP Sector St. Petersburg, FL 07-200] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4403. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; July 4, 2006 Fireworks, Manitowoc, Wisconsin [CGD09-06-097] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4404. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Marinette July 4th Celebration, Marinette, Wisconsin [CGD09-06-098] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4405. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Fourth of July Fireworks, Au Sable River, Oscoda, MI [CGD09-06-099] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4406. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Petoskey Fourth of July Fireworks, Petoskey, Michigan [CGD09-06-100] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4407. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; City of Sheboygan 4th of July Celebration, Sheboygan, Wisconsin [CGD09-06-102] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4408. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Shopko Fireworks Celebrate Americafest, Green Bay, Wisconsin [CGD09-06-103] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4409. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Boyne City July 4th Fireworks, Boyne City, Michigan [CGD09-06-106] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4410. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Sturgeon Bay Fireworks, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin [CGD09-06-107] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4411. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting

the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; National Cherry Festival July 4th Fireworks, Traverse City, Michigan [CGD09-06-108] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4412. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; National Cherry Festival Finale Fireworks, Traverse City, Michigan [CGD09-06-109] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4413. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; TCF Bank Milwaukee Air Expo, Milwaukee, Wisconsin [CGD09-06-112] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4414. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Bauernfind/Morris Wedding Fireworks, Betsie Lake, Frankfort, MI [CGD09-06-115] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4415. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Captain of the Port Lake Michigan, Chicago River, Chicago, IL [CGD09-06-116] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4416. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Captain of the Port Lake Michigan, Milwaukee, WI [CGD09-06-119] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4417. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Air show Practice Flights, Milwaukee, Wisconsin [CGD09-06-120] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4418. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Festa Italiana Fireworks, Milwaukee, Wisconsin [CGD09-06-124] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4419. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Moving safety zone; YMCA Lake Michigan Swim, Lake Michigan [CGD09-06-125] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4420. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Venetian Night Fireworks, Saugatuck, Michigan [CGD09-06-126] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4421. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Door County Triathlon, Egg Harbor, Wisconsin [CGD09-06-127] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C.

801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4422. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Tonawandas Canal Fest Fireworks, Niagara River, Tonawanda, NY [CGD09-06-128] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4423. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Spirit of Racine Triathlon, Racine, Wisconsin [CGD09-06-129] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 15, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. CONYERS: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1110. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prevent caller ID spoofing, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 111-321). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. CONYERS: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 3596. A bill to ensure that health insurance issuers and medical malpractice insurance issuers cannot engage in price fixing, bid rigging, or market allocations to the detriment of competition and consumers; with an amendment (Rept. 111-322). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. FILNER: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 1168. A bill to amend chapter 42 of title 38, United States Code, to prevent certain veterans with employment training assistance; with an amendment (Rept. 111-323). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. FILNER: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 3949. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, and the Servicemember Civil Relief Act, to make certain improvements in the laws relating to benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes (Rept. 111-324). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. CONYERS: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 3237. A bill to enact certain laws relating to national and commercial space programs as title 51, United States Code, "National and Commercial Space Programs" (Rept. 111-325). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama:

H.R. 3978. A bill to amend the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to accept and use gifts for otherwise authorized activities of the Center for Domestic Preparedness that are related to preparedness for and response to terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. BERRY:

H.R. 3979. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny the deduction for

advertising and promotional expenses for prescription pharmaceuticals; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CUELLAR:

H.R. 3980. A bill to provide for identifying and eliminating redundant reporting requirements and developing meaningful performance metrics for homeland security preparedness grants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. HOLDEN:

H.R. 3981. A bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to eliminate the matching requirement for certain bulletproof armor vest purchases under the matching grant program for bulletproof armor vests; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KILDEE (for himself, Mr.

EHLERS, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. MASSA, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. FILNER, Mr. SABLON, Mr. BACA, Mr. CARDOZA, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. PIERLUISI, Ms. WATSON, Mr. CAO, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. FALCOMA, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. CLAY, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. BERKLEY, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts, and Mr. CASTLE):

H.R. 3982. A bill to prepare young people in disadvantaged situations for a competitive future; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts:

H.R. 3983. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain high-performance loudspeakers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts:

H.R. 3984. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty certain electrical transformers rated at 40VA; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN:

H.R. 3985. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a second generation biofuel producer credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HERGER (for himself, Mr. CAMP, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. NUNES, and Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida):

H. Res. 883. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Members of the House receive the necessary cost information regarding health care reform legislation at least 72 hours before any vote on such legislation; to the Committee on Rules.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 32: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 197: Mr. HOEKSTRA.
H.R. 198: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 272: Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky.
H.R. 273: Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado.
H.R. 275: Mr. WALZ and Mr. HUNTER.
H.R. 422: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 571: Mr. MCNERNEY and Mr. BERMAN.
H.R. 624: Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 644: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. FARR, Mr. SERRANO, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 646: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.
H.R. 658: Mr. KAGEN.

H.R. 690: Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, and Mr. DINGELL.

H.R. 734: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 930: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 949: Ms. SHEA-PORTER and Mr. POMEROY.

H.R. 982: Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. JORDAN of Ohio, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. LEWIS of California, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. REHBERG, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. CARTER, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. COBLE, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. MICA, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. STEARNS.

H.R. 1064: Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 1126: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.

H.R. 1142: Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 1168: Mr. MINNICK.

H.R. 1173: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 1189: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1207: Mr. HEINRICH.

H.R. 1235: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 1305: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 1326: Mr. RAHALL and Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.

H.R. 1454: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 1507: Mr. ACKERMAN.

H.R. 1526: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 1585: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 1677: Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, and Mr. ARCURI.

H.R. 1721: Mr. NADLER of New York.

H.R. 1792: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa and Mr. MORAN of Kansas.

H.R. 1820: Ms. RICHARDSON.

H.R. 1821: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 1826: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 1866: Mr. FARR.

H.R. 1895: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.

H.R. 1932: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.

H.R. 1964: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 1993: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 2024: Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 2103: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia and Mr. DELAHUNT.

H.R. 2136: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. MITCHELL.

H.R. 2149: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

H.R. 2194: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts and Mr. BOEHNER.

H.R. 2254: Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 2256: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.

H.R. 2269: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 2279: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida and Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 2373: Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 2377: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois and Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 2406: Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 2408: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 2452: Mr. WOLF, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. MELANCON.

H.R. 2456: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2487: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.

H.R. 2502: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 2528: Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 2559: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2563: Mr. BARROW.

H.R. 2567: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 2568: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 2573: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.

H.R. 2579: Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HONDA, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, and Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 2616: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 2740: Ms. BALDWIN.

H.R. 2755: Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 2817: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 2897: Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. FILNER, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. KRATOVIL.

H.R. 2969: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 3010: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 3077: Mr. CLAY and Ms. WOOLSEY.
H.R. 3101: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3116: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. FILNER, and Mr. ARCURI.
H.R. 3149: Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 3156: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 3226: Mr. RADANOVICH and Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina.
H.R. 3238: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 3248: Ms. BERKLEY.
H.R. 3276: Ms. SUTTON and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.
H.R. 3308: Mr. BAIRD.
H.R. 3328: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 3365: Mr. NYE and Ms. KOSMAS.
H.R. 3380: Mr. PETRI.
H.R. 3415: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 3439: Mr. SOUDER and Mr. ELLSWORTH.
H.R. 3480: Mr. CARNAHAN.
H.R. 3485: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3535: Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H.R. 3560: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.
H.R. 3578: Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN.
H.R. 3646: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 3650: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 3652: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.R. 3696: Ms. GRANGER.
H.R. 3710: Ms. SHEA-PORTER and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 3721: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 3734: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina and Ms. RICHARDSON.
H.R. 3752: Mrs. BACHMANN.
H.R. 3761: Mr. BARTON of Texas.
H.R. 3764: Mr. KUCINICH and Mr. NADLER of New York.
H.R. 3778: Mr. CARNEY and Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida.
H.R. 3790: Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mrs. MALONEY.
H.R. 3791: Mr. KING of New York, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. VISCLOSKEY.
H.R. 3795: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 3822: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 3828: Ms. GRANGER.
H.R. 3838: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 3839: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS and Mr. RODRIGUEZ.
H.R. 3885: Ms. NORTON, Mr. COHEN and Mr. WOLF.
H.R. 3905: Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. REBERG.
H.R. 3924: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 3939: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 3943: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. HARE, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 3959: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.R. 3977: Mr. FILNER, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.J. Res. 11: Mr. PAULSEN.
H. Con. Res. 139: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H. Con. Res. 169: Mr. BONNER.
H. Con. Res. 175: Mr. LATTI, Mr. SOUDER, and Mr. CARTER.
H. Con. Res. 199: Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. REYES, Mr. ANDREWS, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. MASSA, Mr. MURPHY of New York, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. FLEMING, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CONAWAY, and Mr. LAMBORN.
H. Res. 68: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H. Res. 89: Mr. JONES, Mr. PITTS, Mr. DRIEHAUS, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. DINGELL.
H. Res. 185: Mr. LAMBORN.

H. Res. 398: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H. Res. 510: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
H. Res. 633: Mr. FARR.
H. Res. 711: Mr. LYNCH, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H. Res. 713: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. WATSON, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SPEIER, and Mr. SCOTT of Georgia.
H. Res. 759: Mr. LINDER.
H. Res. 763: Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mr. EHLERS.
H. Res. 771: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CASTLE, and Mr. DELAHUNT.
H. Res. 773: Mr. BUYER, Mr. COURTNEY, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H. Res. 833: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. ACKERMAN, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. WOOLSEY, Ms. WATSON, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. COSTA, Mr. TANNER, Mr. SIRE, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. GIFFORDS, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. MANZULLO.
H. Res. 835: Mr. HERGER.
H. Res. 839: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H. Res. 841: Mr. OLSON and Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H. Res. 847: Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H. Res. 856: Mr. LAMBORN and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H. Res. 857: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. CHANDLER, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H. Res. 858: Mr. SHERMAN.
H. Res. 861: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, and Mr. SESTAK.
H. Res. 866: Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. LAMBORN, Mrs. BIGGERT, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. MOLLOHAN.
H. Res. 867: Mr. ADLER of New Jersey, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. AUSTRIA, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. MINNICK, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona, Mr. SHULER, Mr. COLE, Mr. HODES, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. DRIEHAUS, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Mr. BUYER, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Ms. KILROY, Mr. BOCCIERI, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CAO, Ms. TITUS, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. PITTS, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. MELANCON, and Mr. CASSIDY.
H. Res. 868: Mrs. MYRICK.
H. Res. 870: Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOEHNER, Ms. FOX, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. WOLF.
H. Res. 874: Mr. GINGREY of Georgia.
H. Res. 878: Mr. SABLAN.
H. Res. 880: Mr. SABLAN.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. CONYERS

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Judiciary in H.R. 3962, the

“Affordable Health Care for America Act,” do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. RAHALL

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Natural Resources in H.R. 3962, the “Affordable Health Care for America Act,” do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. SPRATT

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on the Budget in H.R. 3962, the “Affordable Health Care for America Act,” do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

SUBMITTED BY MR. GEORGE MILLER OF CALIFORNIA

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Education and Labor in H.R. 3962, the “Affordable Health Care for America Act,” do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

SUBMITTED BY MS. SLAUGHTER

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Rules in H.R. 3962, the “Affordable Health Care for America Act,” do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 3962

OFFERED BY: MR. COFFMAN OF COLORADO

AMENDMENT No. 1: In section 302(a), before “In accordance with this section”, insert the following and adjust the indentation appropriately:

(1) IN GENERAL.—

In section 302(a), add at the end the following new paragraph:

(2) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN ELECTED OFFICIALS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Members of Congress (as defined in section 2106 of title 5, United States Code) and the dependents of Members of Congress shall be enrolled in the public health insurance option under subtitle B. For purposes of the proceeding sentence, Members of Congress and the dependents of Members of Congress shall each be treated as an Exchange-eligible individual.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—

(i) CHANGE TO FEHBP.—Section 8901(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraphs (B) and (D).

(ii) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by clause (i) shall take effect on the first day of Y1.

In section 302(c)(1)

(1) in subparagraph (A), strike “; and” and insert a semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (B), strike the period and insert “; and”; and

(3) add at the end the following new subparagraph:

(C) Members of Congress and the dependents of Members of Congress.